

THE THEATRE:



CLEMENT SCOTT





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THE THEATRE.

A Monthly Review

OF

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EDITED BY

CLEMENT SCOTT.

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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS.

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MR. GILBERT FARQUHAR.

MR. ARTHUR CECIL.

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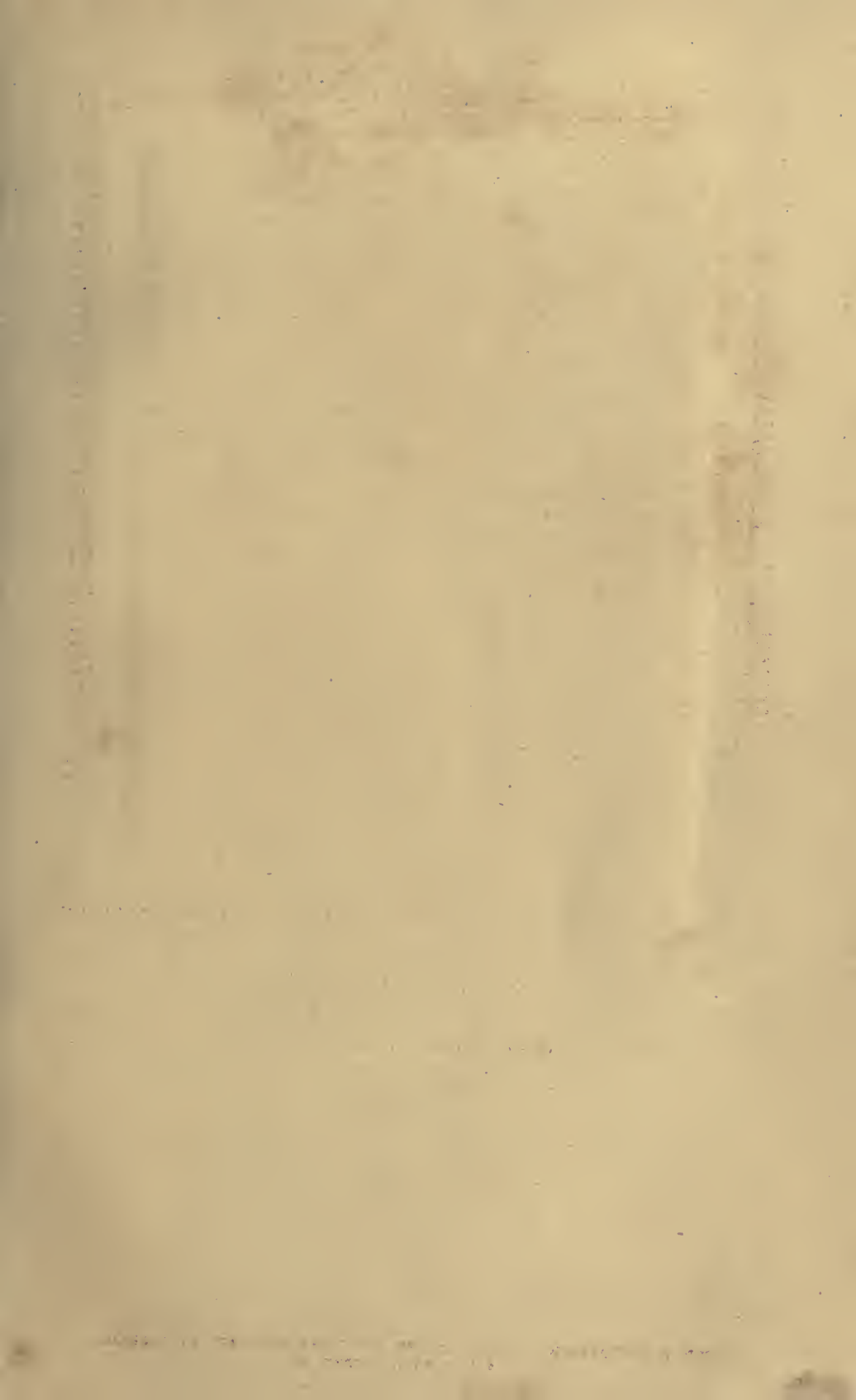
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"Your merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile—a."

THE WINTER'S TALE.

MISS BLANCHE HORLOCK.

Mathews, the elder, as Monsieur Tonson, with his deprecating shrug—this was one of the most living likenesses in the whole gallery, and about the best composition. Though I have not seen it for many years, I remember every touch, every incident: notably, that of the old Frenchman's chamber-candlestick, shadowed in a great black patch on the floor.

Yes, the first years of school took much glitter and glamour of the stage-lights out of my boyhood. To be sure there were the holidays, especially the winter ones, which were always passed in town. Prominent in my early recollections of First Nights are those of Adelphi farces and melodramas, or, as the latter used to be called in the old times, burlettas. I broke off these reminiscences, last month, with the name of Buckstone on the tip of my pen. He was a comparatively new comedian then; and he was an industrious playwright, with a neater style, as I have before remarked, than was altogether common in those days. In 1830 there were, I should think, at least ten of his pieces on the stage, all of which have gone into stock, and are sometimes heard of even now. Scarcely one of his early farces has become quite obsolete. "A Husband at Sight," "Snakes in the Grass," "Popping the Question," "The Happiest Day of My Life," and perhaps two or three more, the names of which do not at this moment occur to me, have all been played by actors who are even now a long way off being superannuated. And these had been written, mark, by a young man from the country who was quite content to take a secondary position in low comedy at a minor theatre. It is true, the Adelphi was strong in comic talent at that time; so strong as to challenge comparison with the patent theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, where comedy and tragedy took equal turns. There were with Fred Yates—himself a company—the elder Mathews, John Reeve, Wilkinson, and that same writer of plays and player of funny parts in them, little Buckstone. As for Yates, I really don't know whether he was most to be admired in broad, eccentric farce, in picturesque scoundrelism and fiendishness, or in foppery of the "flash" Mantalini type.

Buckstone, as a farce writer, was not to be measured with Peake, Poole, or Kenney, but his humour and neatness were both entitled to respect; and it must be acknowledged that he, and he alone, as a playwright, made the "Adelphi drama." Five-year-

old critic as I was when "The Wreck Ashore; or, a Bridegroom from the Sea," was first put on the stage, I cannot but think my interest in the story was legitimately strengthened by some natural judgment of the acting. For example, I can recall a twofold feeling: a sense of illusion, and a distinct and separate sense, also, of admiration for the artistic reality of the famous and terrible scene in the lonely cottage, where the two women, Alice and Bella, are panic-stricken by the lifting of the latch; and I cannot tell what pleasure it gave me to hear, afterwards, from a middle-aged playgoer, that it was difficult for anyone, experienced in the illusions of the theatrical art, to believe Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Fitzwilliam were not themselves *really frightened*. Buckstone wrote several things in that year, 1830, winding up with a pantomime for the Adelphi, "Grimalkin the Great," which was by unanimous agreement pronounced better than the pantomime either at Covent Garden or at Drury Lane. To say the truth, that was not a particularly brilliant epoch for either of the two great patent houses. Though it was their special privilege to present the legitimate drama, the tragedies and comedies in five acts, they fell back too frequently on the melo-dramatic burletta and spectacle, which, in fairness, should have been left to the minor theatres, seeing that these were debarred from competing with the big establishments on a higher ground of art.

There was a theatre to which, in my childhood, I very seldom went, though its play-bills—I mean the large ones—were familiar to me, and, I must own, rather tantalising. It was the Olympic, at the time of the famous "Revels." Madame Vestris, long and long before her marriage with Charles Mathews, was at the head of affairs then. Those bills had a charmingly bright look. There were always as many as four pieces every evening, and, I think, sometimes five. The titles, therefore, came pretty close together, and I remember they were printed alternately in red and green. Now, Madame Vestris had an exceedingly good eye for colour; and she was one of those expensive and determined ladies who will have their way. Those reds and greens must have been something out of the common run of printers' ink, for at this distance of time I cannot look at a piece of decorative Mogador furniture, a sort of open cabinet, quaintly painted, in the room where I write these words, without thinking of Madame Vestris's playbills. The lady, by-the-bye, was heroine of some of the best stories likely to

please a child, and I often fancied I should like to know her better than I ever had the chance of doing. One of these tales came from Norwich, where some elder relations of my father were living. As the story will perhaps be new to most, if not all of my readers, I may as well tell it. The lady was playing at the theatre of that ancient city, and there was a general disposition to encore her favourite song, "Pray, Goody, please to moderate the rancour of your tongue," which she had been singing in "Midas." Opposition to the popular call was offered in a rudely strenuous manner from a private box, the sole occupant, who was a person of local importance, giving himself some very magisterial airs. However, the house was too strong for him, and the song was repeated. As soon as the singer came to the couplet,

"Remember when the judgment's weak

The prejudice is strong,"

she dwelt with retarded emphasis on the words, and, turning to the side box, dropped a charming little curtsey. The consequence was that she had to sing the song a third time, such was the unbounded delight of the audience.

I have intimated that between my earliest recollections of the theatre and my hobbidihothood, memory halts a little. But I may henceforth find more to say about Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Olympic, Adelphi, Lyceum, and Strand; for those years, 1830 and 1831, left many impressions which fade and revive, fade, and revive, like garden odours long gone by. Sometimes they mingle, as jasmine and honeysuckle may sometimes do. I cannot even now hold separate and distinct, as memories of the Adelphi, the burlesque tragedy of "Quadrupeds" and a piece of wild extravagance by Buckstone, called "Hyder Ali," in which Jack Reeve, I think, played a lion, and somebody else—Wilkinson, was it?—a tiger, and Mrs. Fitzwilliam a wild cat, and the author himself the ghost of a departed kangaroo (with a tale). But I know it was Reeve in the "burlesque tragedy" who made me scream with laughter, by suddenly reining his hobby-horse of war, in the thick of a furious *meléc*, to blow his nose, and anon stooping down to scratch one of the little sawdust-stuffed legs that dangled by the side of his grand basket-work destrier. And please to remember there could only be "burlesque tragedy" when there was tragedy to burlesque. The minor houses took their revenge right merrily on the patent theatres, which alone were allowed

“the luxury of woe” in five acts. This screamingly tragic representation of “The Quadrupeds,” originally called “The Tailors,” was played at the Adelphi by Mathews, Yates, Reeve, Buckstone, and Wilkinson, of “Geoffrey Muffincap” renown. What a constellation of fun, to be sure ! It was in 1830 that Miss Huddart, whom I was afterwards to see at Sadler’s Wells, as Mrs. Warner, made her first appearance in London at one of the large houses—I forget which, nor is it particularly worth remembering, for the play was produced in slovenly fashion, and the lady made no very palpable hit. Belvidera was chosen for her entry on the London boards. She was not young even then ; so she made a most matronly Pauline to the equally mature Claude Melnotte of Phelps, fourteen or fifteen years afterwards at the Wells. As I have already observed, the early years now spoken of were not the most glorious either for Covent Garden or Drury Lane, and it was matter of complaint against Charles Kemble, at the first, and Captain Polhill, at the second, that Kean, Miss Kelly, and “Puff” Jones were either out of engagements or buried in country barns.

In my last month’s reference to “The Brigand” as my first theatrical experience—if I except Astley’s, which was not then reckoned a theatre—I spoke of Miss Faucit. She was Harriet, elder sister of Helen Faucit, since Lady Martin. It occurred to me to mention some possible changes in the cast of Planché’s drama, which might have affected Mrs. Barrymore’s place, and I now find that there was some cause for my doubtful way of speaking. The lady, being an excellent pantomimist, and a favourite Fenella of her day, did, however, from the first production of “The Brigand,” as on the night I saw her, play Maria Grazie, while Miss Faucit was the Ottavia. It was in a subsequent season that the change occurred, Mrs. Barrymore left the theatre, and Miss Faucit was promoted—I suppose it was promotion—from Ottavia to Maria ; some other lady, unknown to fame, stepping into Ottavia’s shoes. But I should be very much surprised to hear, on sufficient authority, that any change in the cast extended, for so much as a single night, to Wallack, though his brother Henry was in the theatre and in the piece. It is all but impossible to imagine an under-study of Massaroni. There was some disposition, among critical playgoers at that time, to

complain of "*Toujours Brigand*." Unquestionably, as I have just shown, there was ground for dissatisfaction. With Kean and eligible commodities in the market, it was not very creditable that such a monopoly as Drury Lane, in those times of patent rights, should be eternally fiddling on one melodramic string. Nor did it help to keep up the prestige of Wallack, at whose frequent appearances in one part sneers began to be levelled, not unfairly, as we must now own. Yet it is a pleasure to me, even now, that I saw the original cast. Wallack could have had no pretence to stand in the front rank of tragic actors; but for all that he was decidedly valuable in tragedy, as well as melodrama, and especially in parts requiring manliness, with a fiery spirit and a gallant bearing. His *Icilius* gained him praise from critics not in the habit of scattering superlatives. Free from affectation, or the faintest shadow of it, he was a sound elocutionist, delivering passages of blank verse with easy elegance and an adequate stress. For clear ringing emphasis, for a certain robust grace, and for distinctness of manner without mannerism, the actor of the present day who most resembles him is Mr. James Fernandez.

One of my very juvenile recollections of a big stage refers to the production, with elaborate magnificence, of "*Gustavus III. ; or, the Masked Ball*," when I myself was an actor in the great scene. Small amateur supernumerary as I was, it amused and astonished me to hear the performers talking among themselves out loud. It was only in the ball-scene that I trod the great stage, and looked far into the wondrous rows of faces under the vast chandelier. There were other chandeliers illuminating the festive scene behind the curtain. One of the things I remember best is a comic dance, a grotesque *pas de deux*, by a man and woman, but probably both men, the masks and costumes being so arranged that the performers faced both ways, and created a funny effect when they pirouetted, as also when, at the close of the dance, they ran up the stage, seemingly backwards. Another well-remembered incident was towards the end, when a pistol shot and scream brought about the denouement. I suppose I had been prepared for this, as it did not startle or alarm me; but I tried in vain to see what was going on, just as a child would have acted in the circumstances had he stood on the outskirts of a street

crowd in the midst of which something interesting might be seen with a little pushing.

Still, most of my playgoing at that time was limited to small theatres, such as the Adelphi and the still smaller Strand. Wrench was then at the latter house, and I remember Hammond there, and his parody of "Man Fred" (Manfred), the Alpine gulf being burlesqued by a street scene with the roadway up. The Adelphi farces were *the* thing, of course; and it is noteworthy that they were all played without gagging, or with so little recourse to that inartistic egotism as to leave the author's meaning unimpaired. If any man of Yates's company seemed, from his natural exuberance, to be a likely offender, it must have been Reeve. But Reeve had no gagging propensity. The first inveterate gagger of that age was Lablache, who gagged incorrigibly, in all languages, and as Dr. Bartolo would mingle English and Neapolitan slang in a way more remarkable for grotesque drollery than genuine humour or discretion. Wright and Ronconi—paranomasia apart—followed in his later footsteps; as they have been followed in turn by many comedians—shunned by few. In speaking last month of John Baldwin Buckstone, who, if he ever gagged, was careful not to spoil his author's meaning thereby, or to deprive a brother-actor of his cue, I mentioned having seen him first at the theatre in Milton Street, which thoroughfare I erroneously placed at the East-end. The mistake, for which my old friend, John Hollingshead, has good-humouredly rebuked me, was not very heinous. Far from me be the flippant contention that whatever is not west is east, and that you must, as a matter of fact, go a pretty long way eastward from Charing Cross before you get, by northerly bends, into Barbican. It is better I should own at once I was wrong to say "east" when I meant "nor'-nor'-east." This last would have been strictly correct, even with the addition of "end;" for London "on the stones" really did end thereabout at the time I spoke of, and all beyond was more or less rural. If my esteemed crony does not remember Hoxton "with an eye of green in it," I do. There was much open space on its southern side, towards Cripplegate, Barbican, and the aforesaid Milton Street, the Grub Street mercilessly satirised by Pope, and renamed, at the instance of a kind-hearted clergyman, within living memory. Fields and market-gardens reached in almost unbroken

continuity from Hoxton, on its northern and north-eastern sides. Often have I walked that way through Kingsland to Hackney Downs. If the Subscription Theatre in Milton Street was much frequented, fifty-five years ago, by Hoxtonians, they would have earned their evening's amusement by the dreariness and even danger of the pilgrimage to and fro. Next month I shall have something to say about a far more renowned suburban theatre, and in its most distinguished days—Sadler's Wells.

(To be Continued.)



A Kiss of Peace.

SWEET, when you passed from living into death
No love-word faltered on the trembling air,
No dying whisper hushed the sobbing breath
With which I knelt in motionless despair.
I had no right to mourn you. Other eyes
Might watch the glory fading from your own,
And other hands to distant Paradise
Might soothe your way, while I knelt on alone.

But when the hours had passed, and all the room
Was wrapped in silence, and the steady light
From yonder lamp was all that pierced the gloom;
When masses of fresh roses, red and white,
Lay rich with fragrance at your head and feet,
With one bud lying twixt your finger tips,
I stood beside you for one moment, Sweet,
And stooping, kissed you, on the pure pale lips.

Dear, when you wakened did your spirit weep,
Or in its new-found wisdom understand
The piteous love which watched that dreamless sleep,
And sought to follow to the unknown land?
When the clouds lifted from your patient head
And flooded you in light of life divine,
Did my kiss quiver o'er your lips' soft red?
Did any heart-throb whisper it was mine?

If on your peacefulness there sometimes break
A sudden pity for the hopes that died,—
If you grow gladder that for your dear sake
A life-work has been blessed and purified,—
Keep ever in your heart untouched with pain
The memory of that kiss of sanctity,
And when in God's own time we meet again,
In holy greeting give it back to me.

M. E. W.

Napoleon the Third and the Stage.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

AMONG the many amusements provided for the recreation of the privileged visitors to Compiègne, none were more generally popular than the series of theatrical performances given at the palace during the months of November and December in each year. These consisted partly of short pieces selected from the repertoires of the *Comédie Française* or the *Gymnase*, and partly of original "revues" and charades, more than one of which were written for the occasion by the Marquis de Massa. The latter were played exclusively by amateurs, including several ladies of the court, and as many volunteers of the male sex as could advantageously be pressed into the service; the young Prince Imperial and the Princess de Metternich—as perfectly at home on the stage as in her own drawing room—not disdaining to figure in the cast.

One of the most ingenious of these improvised trifles was a charade in three tableaux, produced in November, 1866, and represented by the Princess de Primoli, the Duke and Duchess de Conegliano, the Countess de Sancy-Parabère, Count Lepic, Baron Lambert and Charles Garnier, the architect of the new opera, who did his best to emulate Montero, of the *Cirque*, by undertaking the part of a monkey. In the following year, a temporary sojourn of the court at St. Cloud was enlivened by the performance of two comedies, namely, "*La Cravate Blanche*," by Gondinet, which, interpreted by Landrol and Mlle. Pierson, had enjoyed a run of over three hundred nights at the *Gymnase*; and "*Un Baiser Anonyme*," a one act piece, of the *Théâtre Français*, by Albéric Second and Jules Blerzy, played by Bressant, Febvre, Mmes. Madeleine Brohan and Riquer.

The first named writer, in his recently published "*Recollections*," relates an amusing anecdote of his collaborator, an "agent de change" in high repute at the Bourse, whose great and hitherto unsatisfied ambition was to see his patronymic printed in the

bills of a theatre as the author of a successful dramatic production. Having implicit confidence, says Albéric Second, in my friend's usual good luck, and being anxious to do all in my power towards enabling him to gratify his desire, I suggested to him that we should jointly utilise an idea which had occurred to me; and the result of our labours was "*Un Baiser Anonyme*," which was offered to, and accepted by, the *Théâtre Français* a few days prior to its appearance before the august audience of St. Cloud.

"Our little piece met with a most indulgent reception, and at the conclusion of Gondinet's charming comedy, I was on my way to the buffet, overcome by thirst and excitement, when I suddenly found myself face to face with the Emperor, who, with his accustomed urbanity, deigned to express his approval of "*Un Baiser Anonyme*."

"Ah, Sire," I replied, "how happy my collaborator, Monsieur Blerzy, would be, if he heard such an encouragement from your Majesty's lips!"

"Where is he?" inquired Napoleon. "Present him to me; I shall be glad to know him."

I bowed, and went in search of my colleague; but, failing to discover his whereabouts, decided that a few minutes, sooner or later, would make no difference, and paused at the refreshment table to imbibe a tumbler of iced champagne. Presently, looking round, I beheld Blerzy in conversation with the Emperor, and waited until the interview was at an end. I imagined that my friend would be in the seventh heaven of delight; but, to my astonishment, he hurried towards me, pale, and in a strange state of agitation.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"Matter," he repeated, in a tone of deep dejection, "I only wish I knew, I am almost inclined to think that the Emperor must have lost his head."

"Nonsense! Did he not compliment you on your success?"

"Not of a word of it."

"What then did he say?"

"He complained seriously to me that the number of crimes in the department of Seine and Oise had lately increased in an extraordinary degree, adding that he relied on my zeal to discover

the perpetrators of a mysterious murder committed three days ago in the neighbourhood of St. Cyr."

We were still staring at each other in utter bewilderment, when one of the court chamberlains suddenly tapped me on the shoulder, and led us both up to the Emperor, who was laughing heartily. Beside him stood an individual, bearing as striking a resemblance to my collaborator as one of the twin brothers Lionnet bears to the other.

"Monsieur Blerzy," said Napoleon, "I owe you a thousand apologies, but you will understand my mistake when I have presented you to this gentleman, your double, or, in other words, M. le Procureur Impérial at the tribunal of Versailles!"

Besides frequent visits to the Opera and the Comédie Française, the Emperor usually made a point of witnessing the performance of the best pieces produced at the minor theatres, especially those exclusively devoted to popular drama, for which species of entertainment the Empress had a decided predilection. When Mélingue as Benvenuto Cellini, at the Porte St. Martin, had accomplished his nightly task of moulding before the audience a clay figure of Hebe, he was summoned after the fall of the curtain to the imperial box, and congratulated on his versatile talent; Napoleon at the same time courteously expressing a wish to possess the statuette as a memorial of the evening and an ornament for his cabinet at the Tuileries.

The Emperor's first interview with Mlle. Déjazet dated from some years previous to his accession to the throne. Like Mlle. Mars, the sprightly Virginie was an ardent Bonapartist, and, during Prince Louis's confinement in the citadel of Ham, journeyed thither in the hope of seeing him; this, however, being impracticable, owing to the strictness of the *consigne*, she was obliged to content herself with entrusting to his confidential servant a medallion she was in the habit of wearing, charging him to deliver it into the captive's own hands as a token of her sympathy.

Shortly after his escape from prison, she arrived in London, and one of her first visitors in the green room of St. James's theatre was Louis Napoleon himself, who, pointing to the medallion attached to his watch chain, assured her that he regarded it as a charm which had already brought him good luck.

"It will bring you better still, Monseigneur," said the actress, "if you continue to wear it."

"Madame," he replied, with a smile, "I accept the augury."

Whether the medallion had anything to with the Prince's future greatness or not is a debateable question, but Mlle. Déjazet always maintained that it undoubtedly had; and on this head—as on a good many others—she was adamant.

A few days after Bouffé's final retirement from the stage, during one of Jules Janin's weekly receptions at his *châlet* in the Rue de la Pompe at Passy, the latter asked him by what miracle he had contrived to obtain the necessary permission to take his farewell benefit at the Opera.

"Thereby hangs a tale," replied the actor, "which dates from something like twenty years ago. Would you care to hear it?"

"*Naturellement*," said the feuilletonist of the *Débats*, adopting for the nonce the language of a popular low comedian of the Variétés.

"Well then, you must know that in 1847 I was engaged by my excellent friend Mitchell to give a series of performances at the French theatre in London, and on one particular evening appeared successively in the 'Gamin de Paris' and 'Michel Perrin.' The first-named piece had just finished, and I had hardly entered my dressing room to prepare for the second, when someone knocked at the door.

"'Come in,' I exclaimed, in no very good humour, for the *entr'acte* was a short one, and I had no time to lose. A glance however, at the new comer satisfied me that my apprehensions of being hindered by the idle gossip of some privileged lounge behind the scenes were unfounded, my visitor happening to no other than Count d'Orsay, one of the most attractive and amiable men I ever met, and a constant patron of the St. James's theatre. He was accompanied by another gentleman, a stranger to me, whom he introduced as a compatriot, desirous of personally thanking me for the pleasure my acting in the "Gamin" had afforded him.

"Besides," added the Count, "my friend has a favour to ask of you, which, as I also am interested in the matter, you will doubly gratify me by not refusing."

"I trust, Monsieur Bouffé," said the stranger, after a few complimentary remarks, "that you will excuse the liberty I am taking in requesting your permission to remain here during your change

of costume. I have just seen and admired you in a youthful part, and, if it is not too great an indiscretion, am extremely curious to witness the process of transformation into an old man."

"If that is all," I replied, "nothing is easier. In less than a quarter of an hour the metamorphosis will be complete."

I set to work with a will, and my two visitors watched with evident interest the progress of my toilet. When the last details had been arranged to my satisfaction, "Gentlemen," I said, "Michel Perrin is at your service."

As we descended the stairs together, the stranger thanked me repeatedly for complying with his wish, and assured me that he would not forget what he was pleased to call my obliging courtesy. When we separated, Count d'Orsay lingered behind, and whispered to me, pointing to his companion, "Do you know who he is?"

"Not in the least," I answered; "I never saw him before to-night."

"Shall I tell you I?"

"By all means. I like him extremely."

"He is Prince Louis Bonaparte."

"The ex-prisoner of Ham?"

"The same."

* * * * *

Years have passed since then, and my failing health, which only permitted me to appear occasionally on the stage, had of late been warning me that it was time to think seriously of securing some provision for the remainder of my days. My finances were at a low ebb, and I had a family to support; my only resource, therefore, on abandoning my profession, was a farewell benefit, on the success of which depended, not merely my own future, but also that of my children. One evening, surrounded by my old comrades in the foyer of the Gymnase, I was meditating how best to realise my project, when I was asked if I had applied to Montigny for the use of his theatre.

I replied in the negative.

"Why not? He could hardly refuse you."

"If possible," I said, "I should prefer taking my benefit at the Opéra."

Everyone stared at me in amazement. "At the Opéra!" cried

Derval, the stage-manager. "What can you be thinking of? You might as well ask for the moon!"

"Nevertheless, I intend trying."

My colleagues looked at each other with a pitying smile, and the report soon got about that "poor Bouffé" was decidedly mad.

I let them talk, and quietly prepared my petition, which I addressed to the Emperor in person. In less than twenty-four hours it was placed in the hands of the manager of the Opéra, with the following words, in the handwriting of my visitor at the St. James's:—

"For Monsieur Bouffé, yes, certainly!"

"And thus," concluded the creator of Michel Perrin, "it came to pass that the receipts of my benefit, which at the Gymnase might, perhaps, have reached seven or eight thousand francs, exceeded five-and-twenty thousand!"



Three Famous Pantomimes.

BY W. J. LAWRENCE.

“LET us then review the acting manager of Drury Lane,” writes that mild scoundrel, Theophilus Cibber, speaking of David Garrick, in his diffuse “Dissertations on the Theatres”: —“In the year 1747 he opened that theatre with an excellent prologue; the conclusion of which gave the town to hope ’twould be their fault if, from that time, any farcical absurdity of pantomime or fooleries from France were again intruded on ’em. . . . But has he kept his word during his successful reign? Has the stage been preserved in its proper purity, decency, and dignity? Have no good new plays been refused nor neglected? Have none but the most moral and elegant of the old ones been reviv’d? Have we not had a great number of these unmeaning fopperies miscall’d Entertainments, than ever was known to disgrace the stage in so few years? Has not every year produced one of these patch-work pantomimes?”

Satan reproving sin! One would never imagine from the highly indignant tone of this outburst that the writer himself had ever concocted a pantomime or played Harlequin. As a matter of fact, he had done both. Garrick was surely not blamable for endeavouring to hoist his managerial rival Rich with his own petard; and it was childish on Cibber’s part to think for a moment that the town could be entirely weaned from the lighter forms of entertainment. Little Davy took the common-sense view of the subject, openly expressing his opinions on that head in one of his inaugural prologues:—

Sacred to Shakspeare was this spot designed,
To pierce the heart, and humanise the mind,
But if an empty house, the actor’s curse,
Shows us our Lears and Hamlets lose their force;
Unwilling, we must change the noble scene,
And in our turn present you Harlequin,



"From seventeen to forty-nine are
considered years of indiscretion"

THE MIKADO.

MR. DURWARD LELY.

Happily for poor Cibber's peace of mind, he was sleeping quietly under the billows when Drury Lane bought out "Harlequin's Invasion" in 1761. This extraordinary pantomime (which probably held the stage longer than any antecedent or subsequent piece of the kind) was evolved by Garrick and the elder Colman, out of a slight burletta which the former had written for a favoured performer at Bartholomew Fair. The plot of the Drury Lane production is not remarkable for its originality, and, indeed, smacks somewhat of the rehearsed tragedy in "Pasquin," with this notable difference, that while in Fielding's memorable piece the triumph of Ignorance follows close upon the murder of Commonsense, the parti-coloured marauder and his satellites in "Harlequin's Invasion" are utterly routed and repulsed by the invincible Shakspeare. Just by way of novelty, Harlequin was for once endowed with the gift of speech; and Garrick, in referring to this retrogression in his epilogue, pays a graceful compliment to the departed Rich:

—'Tis wrong,
The wits will say, to give the fool a tongue,
When Lun appeared with matchless art and whim,
He gave the power of speech to every limb;
Tho' mask'd and mute convey'd his quick intent,
And told in frolic gestures what he meant.
But now the motley coat and sword of wood
Require a tongue to make them understood.

Small wonder that that admirable actor, "Sir Peter Teazle" King, made an inimitable pattering Harlequin; Boaden tells us that "his saucy valets have never been approached"—high praise from such a critic! The comedian's reputation in this part became so great, that we find the "London Magazine" of February, 1775, stating that the authors "are more indebted to the Babylonish change of tongues in *Tom King* than to their wit, humour, or ingenuity: for in that scene harlequin assumes many dialects, but appears as ridiculous as we could wish him, when placed before the countenance of the immortal Shakspeare." A passage in King's letter to Garrick under date "Liverpool, 24th July, 1767," shows that other prominent actors had been associated with this famous pantomime at an early period:

"As to 'The Invasion,' I think it would be proper that I should keep my part, and Parsons be put into Snip. Should Yates think

better of it, and take the covenant, you will undoubtedly choose to have him reinstated. Parsons has played the Harlequin one night for me; now, by this means, should sickness or any accident befall Yates or me you will be at a certainty; the entertainment need not be stopped, as he will then be ready."

Garrick's unpretentious production for many years escaped the fate usually meted out to such *ephemeræ*. It was revived at Drury Lane on Wednesday, January 2nd, 1777, and must also have been performed at the same house during the season of 1781-82 if the gentle Elia is to be credited. In his immortal "First Play" he says: "'Harlequin's Invasion' followed, in which I remember the transformation of the magistrates into reverend beldams seemed to me a piece of grave, historical justice, and the tailor carrying his own head to be as sober a verity as the legend of St. Denys." The performance must have left a remarkable impression on the essayist's mind to be thus spoken of after a lapse of forty years. It is quite possible, however, that Charles Lamb may have refreshed his memory by means of the revival of Garrick's piece—in somewhat altered form, 'tis true—at its birthplace on April 10, 1820. Harley was harlequin on this occasion; and the other characters received excellent treatment at the hands of Madame Vestris, Mrs. Harlowe, Miss Povey, Oxberry, Munden, Kelly, Knight, and Gattie. Hazlitt, failing to foresee the precise complexion to which things pantomimic were to come at last, wrote of the production: "It is called a speaking pantomime. We had rather it had said nothing. It is better to act folly than to talk it." That stricture—indeffensible as it may appear when viewed by modern lights—rang the death-knell of "Harlequin's Invasion."

But if Hazlitt failed to read the portent looming in the theatrical heavens, Geo. Colman the elder—the author of our second famous pantomime—proved himself an apt astrologer. He it was who counselled pantomime writers in the forty-seventh number of "The Connoisseur" to abjure the heathen mythology, and take their plots from the fairy tales; and he directed their attention particularly to a couple of stories which have since found their way to the stage at Christmas time—"The Babes in the Wood" and "Puss in Boots." On Saturday, Sept. 3, 1780, or some three years after he had acquired the Haymarket, Colman gave another valuable lesson to pantomime writers by the production of his "original, whimsical, operatical, pantomimical, farcical, electrical,

naval, military, temporary Extravaganza" entitled "The Genius of Nonsense." "The old fabulous history of Harlequin, Columbine, and Pantaloon," says the "Hibernian Magazine" of the following month, "is the foundation on which this afterpiece is worked; and in the escapes, concealments, metamorphoses, and the *dénouement* differs very little from its numerous predecessors; but the wit, humour, and *temporary satire* with which the author has enlivened the whole, places it in an eminent degree above every competitor." In the opening scene or prologue Harlequin is discovered sitting tailor fashion, and seriously contemplating suicide since it had become the *ton*. He determines upon stitching up his mouth, and is proceeding to put his purpose into execution, when his hand is stayed by the sudden appearance of the Genius of Nonsense (Mrs. Cargill), who remonstrates vigorously. Harlequin begs of her not to *break* the *thread* of his discourse, and explains that he is driven to desperation by the amount of nonsense put into his mouth at the winter theatres; subjoining the remark that if half the members of Parliament and a considerable number of other public men would only emulate his example, the world would be much the better for it. Then follows a lively conversation, in the course of which Harlequin gives it as his opinion that "formerly when his mummery was well contrived he had wit at his finger's end, and satire in every tumble, but that dulness and dialogue came in together." The Genius of Nonsense then introduces herself *in propria persona* to her parti-coloured servitor, who ejaculates in astonishment that he had always considered Genius and Nonsense irreconcilable terms. "Quite the contrary," is the quick reply; "it requires a great deal of genius to give nonsense spirit." The Genius then gives Harlequin an exhaustive account of all those whom she had taken under her particular care, laughs at his suicidal intention, and imperiously bids him participate once more in the joys of active life. Then follows the pantomime proper with a very notable cast. Handsome Jack Bannister, still in his teens, made an excellent, "Vocal and Rhetorical Harlequin," his dumb gymnast counterpart being capably rendered by Lamash—the original Trip in "The School for Scandal." This was the time when that stupendous quack, Doctor Graham, was drawing all London to his "Temple of Health" in Pall Mall; and Colman with admirable forethought contrived to satirise this rare show in a scene painted

in faithful verisimilitude by the facetious Ned Rooker, in the course of which Bannister *fil*s took the house by storm with his Dixey-like imitation of the great dealer in rhodomontade. Rooker's scenery, by the way, must have been particularly fine, as the author of the "Biog. Dram." tells us of the view of the Camp in St. James's Park which concluded the performance, that "it is perhaps as accurate and masterly a spectacle as ever appeared on the more extensive theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane." In proceeding to recite the following lines with a lavish interspersment of animal imitations, Harlequin made a clever point out of the admission, to another character, that his gifts were more rhetorical than vocal, and that, *unlike his father*, he had but an indifferent ear for music.

I'm Master of Forte-piano :
 Notes suited to every case,
 Like puppies I yelp in Soprano,
 Or growl, like a bull-dog in base.
 I can bark like a dog ;
 I can grunt like a hog,
 Squeak like pigs ; or like asses can bray ;
 Or turn'd to a fowl,
 I can hoot like an owl.
 Sure of all I'd be at,
 Can crow sharp, and quack flat ;
 Or gobble, like turkeys, all day.

The humour of the introductory apology lay in the fact that Bannister *père*, the fine quality of whose vocal powers was beyond all dispute, was himself in the cast, and played the small part of Gammer Gurton. Gaggling, tippling John Edwin, pre-eminent among low comedians, and the prince of burletta artists, likewise impersonated Dame Turton ; so that, all things considered, "The Genius of Nonsense" merits its inclusion in this article. It was played as an afterpiece to crowded houses until the end of the season, and never afterwards revived.

Last on our list comes Richard Brinsley Sheridan's pantomime of "Robinson Crusoe"—notable as the first stage treatment of the narrative—which was produced at Drury Lane on Monday, January 29, 1781, and enjoyed a pleasant run of thirty-eight nights. Strangely enough this entertainment, possibly more or less according to custom, was performed in four acts—two

opening and two harlequinade; and the scene shifters must have had a lively time of it, seeing that there were no fewer than eight changes in the first act alone! Some excellent scenery was provided by De Louthembourg, the celebrated Flemish battle painter, to whom playgoers are under a last debt of gratitude for his many vital improvements in *mise en scene*. Sheridan was only directly responsible for the prelude, which opened with the scene in Crusoe's hut, and thenceforward adhered closely to the lines of De Foe's narrative. The harlequinade was arranged by Carlo Delpini, a famous Italian pantomimist who came to England about the year 1774, and who played Crusoe in the opening. Guiseppe Grimaldi was Friday, and other important characters were represented by Wright, Dicky Suett, and Miss Collett. According to the Percy anecdotes, Sheridan on one occasion played the part of Harlequin Friday, through the unavoidable absence of Signor Grimaldi. By the way, it was in this particular production that Joey Grimaldi laboured under the impression throughout his life that he made his *début* on the boards at the age of two; the industrious Charles Whitehead has, however, shown the fallacy of that assumption. The comic scenes were rendered very amusing by means of a magic cask and an appropriation of the bibulous Friars from "The Duenna"; and a clever trick change from the exterior of a convent to that of a windmill, with the clown fastened to the revolving sails, came in for a large share of the nightly applause Truly, "the Useful struggles vainly with Time, but the devourer of all things breaks his teeth on the Agreeable." Only the other day the Lauris were making great capital out of this revolving effect in their spectacle of "Jacko," at the Châtelet. Sheridan's nightly disbursement did not amount to much over twenty pounds; rather a surprising contrast with the enormous amount now lavishly expended by Mr. Augustus Harris. Popular favour maintained the Drury Lane pantomime intermittently on the boards until Easter, 1816, when the great success at Covent Garden of Pocock's melodrama on the same subject consigned it to limbo. Sheridan's production had been revived for a few nights at the same theatre, "by permission of the proprietors of Drury Lane," in the middle of July, 1813, when Joe Grimaldi played Crusoe and Young Bologna Friday. Its final appearance on the metropolitan stage was made at Sadler's

Wells in 1814 on the occasion of Grimaldi's benefit. The performance was otherwise notable for the *début* of the immortal Joey's wayward son in the part of Friday. It will thus be seen that three generations of Grimaldis had entertained the public in this truly famous pantomime.



Vale ! Ave !

I.

FAREWELL, Old Year ! sink to thy last long rest,
 Lulled by the wailing wind, the moaning wave ;
 Thou camest in the dawn-light, bright, and brave—
 Thou diest with the sunset, in the west !
 And gay young hearts long for the coming guest—
 The glad New Year ! But see, o'er fresh-made grave,
 And buried love which nought avail'd to save,
 He comes to some ; ah well, God knoweth best !
 Grim Sin and Want stalk rampant thro' our land ;
 Sad hearts are mourning sore o'er vows unkept ;
 And some, o'er happy days for ever fled :
 Pale sorrow cries, Old Year, on ev'ry hand ;
 Yea, as thou diest, bitter tears are wept !
 Toll solemnly ! the grey Old Year is dead.

II.

All hail, New Year ! In flowing robe of white,
 And crown'd with flowers in thy golden hair,
 With promise of the spring-tide fresh and fair,
 Thou dawnest on the winter's dreary night,
 And lo, the east is flush'd with rosy light,
 As Hope, thine herald, scatters blossoms rare
 Before thy feet ! O, how can we despair,
 Whate'er our grief ! We hail thine advent bright ;
 And to our lips the old familiar phrase—
 " A Happy Year "—arises, as of old,
 When life was bright and knew no shade of fear.
 And so, in the dim Future's untrod ways,
 God grant to all—lit up with rays of gold—
 A year of jubilee—a happy year.

EFFIE MAY AYLING.

The Australasian Drama.

BY DOVER ROBERTON.

WHEN it is remembered that the oldest of the Australasian colonies has attained little more than a centenary, and that most of the colonial settlements are mere youngsters in the pages of history, it is a matter of congratulation to find dramatic progress thereso vigorous and hopeful. Fifty years ago the site of the present City of Melbourne was an apparently irreclaimable swamp, not popular even with the savage, and offering but slight grounds to the most enthusiastic of dreamers for a prophecy of distinction and greatness. Now it is a large and prosperous city, of broad streets, palatial buildings, extensive parks, and with all the luxury and refinement of a complex organization. It would have been excusable, in the acquisition of immense wealth, almost a realisation of the philosopher's stone, if all the energies of the Colonials had been turned to the alluring race for gold, to the neglect of the higher impulses of humanity. Side by side, however, with a strongly practical character has been developed a desire for culture and refinement, resulting in a wide and generous appreciation of the literature and art of the Old Country. Melancholy examples of "collectors," unfortunately are not wanting. They are men who have climbed to fame and wealth from the lowest rung of the ladder, and, finding themselves in new conditions of life, would fain emerge as patrons of Art. Their houses are turned into museums, and the "collector" officiates as showman, glowing with delight as he approaches some high-priced picture, and dwelling fondly on the recollection of the three figures he has written in a cheque book. To such a Philistine I happened to be introduced unfortunately when in Melbourne, and I was accordingly, at an early opportunity, taken round the collection. The curious mixture was very amusing, oleographs and chromo-lithographs flanked genuine original work, while dark daubs of the Flemish School, copied, as I knew, for

twelve shillings a-head, formed a major part of the exhibition. Of the colonial attempts at dramatic literature, I must speak with caution. That they have not usually been successful may be due either to the lack of definite characteristics in society, or from the failure of the dramatist to seize the dramatic and interesting points of colonial life. Schoolmasters and city clerks, conscious of the Promethean fire, have occasionally rushed wildly into the drama, though almost invariably with disastrous results; colonial industry in this department not being encouraged at all enthusiastically.

Of the imported drama, on the other hand, a very satisfactory account can be given. From the earliest days in colonial history a strong desire existed for dramatic representation, prompting the erection of large and commodious theatres in all the more important centres of population. The electric light was adopted in the Melbourne and Sydney theatres long before it was introduced to the London houses, and the necessity for ventilation, acoustics, and general scientific completeness was very widely recognised. The Opera House, the Theatre Royal, the Bijou, and the tastefully-decorated St. George's Hall, of Melbourne, fully testify to the truth of this assertion. A new theatre, the Alexandra, has lately been opened with comfortable accommodation for 2,500 persons. The floor of the auditorium is divided into two nearly equal portions, the front one devoted to the stalls, and the back one to the pit, the cheapest part of the house. The dress and family circles are on the gallery immediately above the floor, the dress circle being in front. Higher still is the upper circle, which will accommodate 500 people. Crimson is the prevailing colour throughout the theatre, and pale blue the predominating colour of the walls, the dado being brick red. The ceiling, likewise, is pale blue, with stars scattered over it, and there is a large centre pattern through which the electric light will be used. The orchestra under the proscenium is so constructed that the roof of it will have the effect of a sounding board. The height from the floor of the stage to the gridiron is fifty-four feet, or ten feet higher than the stage of the Grand Opera House at Paris. The opening of the proscenium is thirty-three feet wide. Sydney has similar theatrical accommodation; the Royal and the Gaiety being particularly well-appointed houses. It is my pleasing duty to record that no encouragement is given to that system of blackmail so objectionable in many of our London theatres.

As I read recently of the death of William Hoskins the actor, I

recalled many an incident of his dramatic career in the colonies. Gaining his experience at Sadler's Wells and the Olympic Theatres, Mr. Hoskins emigrated about thirty years ago with a chosen band of friends to Australia. His success was at once assured. After a brilliant season at the old Queen's Theatre he went on tour through most of the Australasian colonies, and established a name for artistic excellence on the stage, and genial character in private life, that will remain for many years a powerful influence in Australasia.

In New Zealand, where I met him, he did an immense work in cultivating a correct taste for dramatic art. As lessee and part proprietor of the Theatre Royal, Christchurch, he gathered round him a strong stock company and sedulously drilled them in accordance with his high ideal of art. There he produced all the year round, without any extraneous aid, Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Sheridan, and the good old school in a way that would not have been unworthy of a London stage. His conceptions of Master Walter in *The Hunchback*, of Jack Falstaff, and of Sir Peter Teazle will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed them. He was eminently the scholar, not hampered by tradition, but creating his characters with high intelligence and a keen and reverent estimate of the spirit of his author. Ably supported by his wife, Miss Florence Colville, an accomplished and brilliant actress, he continued to draw large audiences night after night to the Theatre Royal, until circumstances, the details of which it is not for me to indicate, operated disastrously, and the lesseeship was brought to a close.

Mr. J. C. Williamson has proved over and over again, that with a capable company he can reap golden harvests through the colonies, and never to my knowledge has he failed to "strike oil" wherever he has planted his show.

Miss Louise Pomeroy, an American actress of talent and wonderful versatility, playing light comedy, tragedy, and character parts, brought a well-balanced Co. through the colonies some time since, and found that substantial appreciation was not lacking when a good all-round performance was offered. Shakespeare's plays were mounted remarkably well, and the minor parts studied far more than in an ordinary London production, with the result that an overflowing treasury was the repeated experience at every town the company visited.

George Rignold, too, with his "Henry V." spectacle could speak feelingly, I am sure, of the enthusiastic reception he met with ; while Maccabe, in his light and happy way, must admit the ease with which he raked in the guineas at will. Bandmann, Genevieve Ward, Jenny Lee, and many another old-world actor probably retain in a warm corner of their hearts a grateful recollection of colonial generosity and good will.

The social position of the actor in the colonies is a problem that has not been solved. In very rare instances is he admitted within the charmed circle of Society's At Home and garden-parties, though this may arise, not from any positive dislike to his class, but rather from a confused notion that the Bohemianisms and vagaries of the profession are incompatible with an orderly and conventional community. The word "conventional" may sound odd in connection with such an incipient community. It is none the less true, however, that colonial society always looks to the old land for guidance in delicate minutiae of ethics, adapting itself as far as circumstances will permit to the *lex inscripta* of London Society.

The attitude of the Church towards the Stage is far more liberal than is the case in this country. Clergymen of every sect are found who do not regard the theatre as the broad way to an Inferno, they enter into the amusement as well as into the more serious occupations of their people, and it is one of the commonest sights in Australia and New Zealand to see a high-collared and mysterious waiscoated divine roaring with delight at some quips and cranks of the stage. A venerable dean of the colonial church, for whom I have the greatest reverence, I have frequently seen in the front stalls at a "Mikado," or similar performance, enjoying intensely the innocent fun and revelry, and taking in, I am sure, a broader conception of humanity from his visits than those very-orthodox books of his could supply.

Amateur efforts at the drama are usually dire failures. I have attended some scores of them, and, with the exception of a fairly capable Society at Sydney, pronounce them the most absurd and ridiculous exhibitions I have ever seen. The colonial histrionic germ may be latent, but it is clearly in an embryonic condition requiring to be hatched in the womb of Time.

A Tale of a Green Room.

BY GODFREY TURNER.

[The following story is told of Eliza Farren, when in receipt of thirty guineas a week (in those days an unusually large salary), and betrothed to Edward, 12th Earl of Derby; and of Harriett Mellon, who, at the same time, was a young actress drawing exactly as many shillings from the same treasury, while unconscious of her destiny to be the wife, first of a rich banker, and then of a duke, and to die the wealthiest woman in England. See "Memoirs of Miss Mellon, afterwards Duchess of St. Albans," by Mrs. Cornwell Barron-Wilson; lately re-published by Remington and Co.]

BY the green-room fire one night, while listening to the wintry rain,
Silent, pensive, full of sadness, stood the star of Drury Lane.
Wealth and rank were both before her—soon to be a great man's wife;
Reputation she had won by honest work and stainless life.
Lady Townley, Lady Teazle, first and best Berinthia;
Many were the mimic glories she had compassed in her day.
And to think that it was waning, waning in its brilliant prime,
Sorely weighed upon her spirit, like a mockery of time.
Must she leave the prize untreasured, drop the chaplet fresh and fair,
See its leaves and roses wither, she had worked so well to wear?
Such the sad, proud doom of fortune, penalty of gifts unsought,
Price of triumph, social honour, station, grandeur—dearly bought!
Just promoted from the second of the green-rooms to the first
Was a younger actress—one whose gifts, by Siddons seen and nurs't,
Sealed her for a famous future; she was wild with joy and pride,
And her rhythmic feet marked cadence to the tune she hummed
aside.

Snatches of a rustic ditty came unbidden to her lips—
Lips as sweet as summer roses that the sunlit brown-bee sips.
She was but a village damsel, such as on a country road
You had deemed a lovely picture with her little market load.
Yet not peasant-like, believe me, with her eyes and hair of jet
Shining in the London green-room, looked the beautiful brunette.
Tall was she, and queenly even, as in valley, field, or wood
One may spy a royal maiden, diadem'd with womanhood.
And her glad, unconscious singing, and her movements full of grace,
And the wild, pure joy that mantled in her bosom and her face
Moved the sad and silent lady, bade her sympathy arise,
Woke the woman in the actress, till the tears stood in her eyes.
"Happy girl!" the lady whispered softly, "how I envy thee!
All the world I'd give were hope and joyousness like thine for me."
"You! you envy me!" she answered, "you, a lady of the land;
All delightful things you wish for ready at your least command!"
"No, not all," replied the other, by a sudden passion wrung;
"Not the dancing foot of gladness, sparkling eye and artless tongue;
Not the happy little song, nor lightsome heart from which it sprung!"

The Drury Lane Managers.

FROM KILLIGREW TO AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

THE office of managing a theatre has always had a sort of fascination, and has drawn on for persons, qualified or unqualified, to ruin or prosperity. The attraction seems to lie in the feeling of absolute control, hundreds (and occasionally a thousand) of persons being dependent on the will, humours, or caprice of the administrator. In the instance of a really capable man there is the confidence that his powers will ensure him a certain success, while the knowledge of the public taste often tempts him to make the bold *coup*. He may enjoy the pleasure of selecting suitable players, with forecasts of their future attraction not then discernible to other eyes. There must be fortitude of the highest order, not to be daunted or checked by reverse, and which will consider failure in a few ventures as inevitable accidents, which may delay, but must not alter, the larger policy which he is carrying. Most managers with these gifts of courage, venture, and prudence united have been successful. A man furnished with the proper gifts undertakes management; he is as sure of success as the merchant. On the other hand, the temptation for the adventure is irresistible. In no walk of life is ignorance or lack of true instinct so certain and so speedily to bring about destruction. The finest actors may be engaged; the most sumptuous shows set up; all in vain, unless these elements are fittingly combined or selected. In our own day, when a theatre is often opened "like a shop" by unqualified persons who have someone with money "behind them," disaster follows disaster, and the result may be predicted with certainty. It is knowledge, not capital, that does it. The late Mr. Bateman embarked his savings in the Lyceum Theatre—then a decaying place, open and shut at recurring intervals—and made some terrible mistakes at starting from lack of familiarity, he being an American, with the taste of the English public. He had the

sagacity, however, to see the merits of our great actor, then comparatively obscure, and one single happy selection—the choice of the well-known “Bells”—turned the tide which he took at the flood, and led him on to fortune. For twelve years the Lyceum has enjoyed a prosperity that recalls the flourishing days of the early management of Garrick. The course of the little Prince of Wales’ Theatre offers another instance of talent and instinct beginning with small resources leading on to triumphant success. More signal still has been the issue in regard of that great “Dom Daniel” of a theatre, Drury Lane, so costly from its size and incidents of working that the slightest check must entail loss. Yet here Mr. Augustus Harris, as he has himself graphically told us, boldly ventured, and with unerring instinct discovered what was necessary to draw the crowd. The result is that Drury Lane now flourishes exceedingly. On the other hand, we have a recent instance of disaster in the fate of an amiable and clever lady who, animated by the best wishes, but wholly inexperienced, embarked her fortune in an unlucky, and proceeded from failure to failure, until compelled to retire from further experiment.

Management is a gift wholly distinct from other natural gifts. It requires perfect knowledge of men, and the treatment of men, and, above all, of women, and that mysterious knowledge of the public, and here it is true that the manager is born, not made. I have indeed seen in old writings the word spelt “mesnager,” *i.e.*, an old French word for controlling by contrivance, or force of mind.

It is curious that abroad, management seems to fall rather to authors than actors, as though the being a performer enfeebled and dulled the fine sense and tact required for control in England. On the other hand most managers have chiefly been “mere players.” Garrick and Irving, a hundred years apart, are perhaps the only two greatly successful instances that can be pointed to. Elliston, Macready, and the two Kembles, and Charles Kean are instances of failure. Irving, like Garrick, has the true managerial gifts, sympathising with his followers and the public, power of control and of inspiring others, thoroughness in carrying out his principles, considering failure only a delay, and large and magnificent ideas.

Owing to the peculiar relations of the players in the early days of the stage the position of manager was wholly different to what

it is now. Being in a state of partial servitude the actors formed a sort of indemnity in turbulence and insubordination to those who ruled them. Hence, the managers from the Restoration to Garrick's reign were men much of whose work had to be done *outside* the theatre, meeting intrigue by intrigue, confronting or propitiating the Court and courtiers in difficulties with that despotic official, the Lord Chamberlain. Hence the manager had to be a bold and *rusé* personage. He was a conspicuous, important personage also. As there were but the two Patents and the two Royal Theatres he had a position akin to that now held by the director of the Français. Hence, there were contentions and oppression with due resistance. In later times, where there was a fresh drama every night, and each drama has its fixed cast, this gave the players, who had each made their character, a certain independence, as they knew the attraction of the character depended on them. The manager was thus controlled to a certain extent. Nowadays, with the general level of talent and abundance of players, the position is reversed, and the play "runs" a year] and] more,] automatically as it were. The old managerial type, with his special gifts, natural and acquired, no longer exists, simply because he has not the same sort of undertaking to deal with. His actors are no longer the free, independent creatures, with distinct individualities whom it requires tact and ability to "manage." They are simply engaged as a banker would engage his clerks. They fill an office or perform duties which a hundred others would do just as well. A piece is performed for a year and more if successful, and, once started, moves automatically like an engine. But where three or four great comedies were played in the week, each character in which was the property of a special actor which no other could do so well, the manager was in the relation of a minister to his follower and colleagues; they were subordinate, but independent; had to be conciliated, humoured, and treated handsomely. The present manager of the Français, M. Claretie, it will be seen, suggests an idea of what the troubles and difficulties of the old manager were.

A history of the Drury Lane Theatre would be fairly a history of the English stage. Here all the great battles of the stage were fought, and here it was that all the more famous managers ventured on manage-

ment. "Have you heard the news?" said Elliston, meeting Charles Lamb, and swelling with pride; "I am the new lessee of Drury Lane," and passed on. The line of managers is not a long one but it is a significant one. Here they are:—Killigrew, Collier, Colley Cibber, Sir Richard Steele, Highmore, Lacey, Garrick, Sheridan, Lord Byron and colleagues, Elliston, Bunn, Macready, and so on to our own times. Three-fourths of these were remarkable personages, their lives full of adventure, and whose character has stamped a certain force and pressure on their time. Elliston's story is a most extraordinary one; Garrick is in every way an honour to the nation; Steele and Sheridan offered strange eventful histories of their own. All are interesting. Mr. Augustus Harris's story might be included in the instances given in "Self Help," encouraging to those who wish to "make the world their oyster." The rival theatre of Covent Garden could furnish such men and directors as Rich and the Harris's, father and son. The little Haymarket had its Foote and Colman; the Surrey, the sad and interesting account left by the most prolific of dramatists, Dibdin; while the smaller records of the late Mr. E. T. Smith and the unlucky Falconer furnish warning and yet entertainment. Some of these stories are pathetic, others ludicrous; but many more offer instances of severe and manful struggle against overwhelming difficulties, crowned at the end of a life of excitement with complete success.

It is extraordinary when we think of the curious mixture of professions that have been combined with the managers' office. Killigrew, a gay fellow on town, and once an envoy to a foreign country; Rich, a lawyer; Sir John Vanbrugh, a solicitor, and also an architect of great reputation; Steele, a wit, politician, and soldier; also Garrick, the compendium of all that was pleasant in man accomplished, the associate of peers and politicians, elegant in his taste, witty, and full of social gifts; the two Kembles, Macready, Lord Byron, Whitbread, a politician, brewer, and M.P.; Elliston, of a character so bizarre as to be incredible out of a comedy; Bunn, the so-called "poet"; Sheridan, the indescribable and many-sided; and last of all the accomplished, sympathetic, and capable Irving. I say with this series rising before us, a review of their adventures cannot but be found interesting and instructive.

(To be continued).

The Coming Winter.

A TRAGEDY IN BLACK AND WHITE.

(From *Punch*.)

“WE see the Coming Winter,” say the children, “in our dreams
One round of endless holiday the merry Christmas seems.
There is a good time coming of feasting, fun, and rhymes,
Of clever conjurors by day and nightly pantomimes!
Good Santa Claus will hover round the household as we sleep,
And bring us costly toys to break and pretty books to keep;
There’ll be pudding, pie, and pastry in a world too sweet to last,
All in the merry Winter that is coming on so fast!”

“We dread the Coming Winter,” sigh the children in the street,
“For the cold it chills our bodies and our shoeless little feet.
About the shops we wander, to the market down our way,
With eyes too tired for weeping, and hearts too sad to play.
We are hungry in the morning, and go starving to our bed,
And it can’t be ‘Jolly Christmas’ when we want a bit of bread;
We may cry for food to mother; she’ll have nothing left to give
In the long and dreary Winter that is coming—if we live!”

“I love the Happy Winter,” laughs the careless-hearted lass,
As she turns to love herself once more before the looking-glass.
“There’ll be country-house and covert, there’ll be pictures and
the play,
And skating till the night-time, and dancing till the day,
There’ll be lots of pocket-money, for the girl who only knows
To frill her pretty neck with lace, and advertise her hose;
The boys are coming back, and bring their college friends, no
doubt,
In the cheery coming Winter when the money flies about!”

“Ah, God! the Coming Winter!” sighs the maiden at her wheel;
“If only our young sisters there could picture what we feel!
If only pretty virtue could but know how we begin
To break off from our praying and in fancy dream of Sin!
We are dying at our sewing, as the cruel wheel goes round,
And we dream about the river and the noisome underground
We were not born for sorrow, but it hurries on us fast,
Before the coming Winter, that will shiver us at last!”

"Confound it! here's the Winter! Oh! it cuts one like a knife,"
Cry the boys, who, like the children, break the little toys of life!
"Let us shirk the beastly weather, and unite the night and day
In one long and festive gambol that Society calls play.
There'll be baccarat and poker when we make our little 'pile,'
And swindle one another in a gentlemanly style!
He's a fool who thinks of working, there's the odd trick and the
rub,
So we'll sort our Christmas cards like jolly fellows at the club!"

"Can I face the Coming Winter and its miserable ways?"
Asks the threadbare shabby fellow who has known his better
days.
They shun him who have robbed him, and they cut him in the
street,
For grim poverty has stamped him from his head unto his feet.
He hasn't nerve to cringe to them, and hasn't heart to think,
So he shambles round the corner, and he warms himself with
drink.
'Tis the only food that nourishes forgetfulness—alas!
So he toasts the Coming Winter from the poison in his glass!

"About the Coming Winter?" asks the husband to the wife,
As they rub along together in their calm, contented life.
"There's the orthodox subscription that perhaps we ought to
give,
For they tell me these poor creatures find it very hard to live!"
"Well, be just before you're generous," says the matron to her
spouse,
"For if you've to pay the carriage, I have got to keep the house!"
So they order up their dinner, since they've other fish to fry,
And elect to think about the Coming Winter by-and-by!

Look up, good Mr. Dives! from the table where you dine,
And hear the men who murmur, and the little ones who whine,
Go out into the highways and the byways, and behold
The truth, or the deception, of the saddest story told!
It may be some are thriftless, and many more who walk
And curse their empty pockets spend their toiling hours in talk.
It may be this, it may be that, that causes them to fall,
But the cruel, crawling Winter! it is coming on them all!

Go! tell the little children to sacrifice their fun,
Remind the giddy women, "What is Pleasure when its done?"
Say to the boys who gambol, "A better life begin,
Assist a wretch from starving and a woman's soul from Sin!"
This is no time for dreaming! they are drowning within reach!
Fling out a rope to save them! let us practice what we preach,
There is wailing, there is weeping, there are bodies on the rack,
Let us face the Coming Winter! and attack it back to back!

C. S.

Our Musical-Box.

Musical entertainments, public and private, are, as a rule, neither numerous nor remarkable throughout the month of December in this metropolis. The opera season is at its zenith in all the Continental capitals, where foreign instrumentalists of renown are also fulfilling remunerative engagements. English society is "out of town," or gone abroad to escape from the rigours of its native climate. There is consequently but little demand for musical novelties of the concert-room class, and few home-incidents of interest, connected with the practice of the divine art, for the conscientious chronicler of such matters to record. In one of the concerts of his "cyklus," Mr. Henschel last month did produce a novelty, which his audience failed to appreciate. The enterprise, however, continues to merit public support by judicious selections and efficient performances; it is doing well, and promises to become an "institution." The first of Mr. De Lara's winter series of *matinées* was given at the Steinway Hall on the last day of November, and could not therefore be noticed in the Musical Box for December. It afforded the gifted composer an opportunity of introducing to a throng of fashionable dilettanti three new songs, "The Garden of Sleep," "Longings," and "'Twas Eve and May," which were all received with marked favour. Mr. De Lara is singularly felicitous in his choice of the words he sets with such consummate taste and poetical feeling. The text of "The Garden of Sleep" is one of Mr. Clement Scott's most graceful inspirations; Lord Lytton's "'Twas Eve and May" is a lovely little poem; Mr. Alfred Austin has never written more sympathetic verses than those to which he has given the suggestive title of "Longings." Miss D'Alton made a decided hit with the first of the three above-named songs; the other two were admirably sung by the concert-giver, whose excellent rendering of Tosti's "Quanto io t'amerei" and "Pepita" also calls for special mention. One of the pleasantest musical *soirées* I have attended this year, came off on December 4 at the handsome ateliers of "Walery" (Count Ostrorog) in Regent Street, to celebrate the opening of that eminent photographer's new establishment. A long evening's amusement had been provided for M. "Walery's" guests, considerably over a hundred in number, by the engagement of the leading members of the French Opera company, and of many other eminent vocalists, native as well as alien to our soil. Madame Galli-Marié sang no fewer than six times, including two encores that "would not be denied;" her deliverance of the Habañera from "Carmen," and of Tosti's "Vorrei Morir," will not readily be forgotten by those who were privileged to listen to them. It is but seldom that anything so

supremely clever and fascinating is heard in a London drawing-room. Mdlle. Delphine Le Brun delighted all present by her spirited and sympathetic rendering of Gounod's "Printemps;" Messrs. Devries and Duchesne were both enthusiastically applauded for their excellent vocalisation in *sol*i from "Hamlet" and "Faust." Amongst the English singers who contributed to the musical programme of the night, were Isidore de Lara and Hayden Coffin. The former scored a shining success with Tosti's exquisite "Aprile;" and the latter's fine voice was displayed to great advantage in Alfred Cellier's genial ballad, "Queen of my Heart," which has of late become familiar to musical London through its interpolation into the second act of "Dorothy." Count Ostrorog's Oriental notions of hospitality had prompted him to provide his friends with two several and distinct suppers of the most lavish and *recherché* description. One was served a little after midnight; the other about 3 A.M. Between these banquets, M. Verbeck performed some of his most incomprehensible *tours de force*, and a French mimic, whose name I did not catch, went through a complex comic entertainment, partly consisting of "impersonations" effected with the aid of a soft crownless hat and a curiously elastic set of features, and partly of "ombres chinoises," in which the characters were represented by the artist's supple hands. After this diverting interlude, came more musical performances, each first-class of its kind; then the second feast, commencing with hot soup and finishing with candied violets; finally, the party broke up at five in the morning, having been kept up for nearly seven hours with unflagging gaiety.

The musical readers of *The Theatre* will doubtless be glad to hear pleasant tidings of one or two of the eminent foreign vocalists who established themselves solidly in public favour here last season. Signorina Barbi has been "on tour" in Russia and Italy, and has added new laurels galore to those she gathered in such profusion during her brief sojourn in London, where she was unanimously recognised as the most accomplished *cantatrice di camera* of the day. In Warsaw, her triumph was complete; the local papers were all agreed that no such singing had theretofore been heard in the Polish capital. The leading musical critic of Milan described her performance at a classical concert given at the Conservatoire as "a ray of sunlight," whilst his colleague of the "Secolo," wrote of her as follows:—"The Barbi is inimitable, unsurpassable—intensely sympathetic to eye and ear alike. Exquisite indeed is the pleasure derived from her dainty phrasing, velvety voice, and noble interpretation of the thoughts with which Heaven has inspired the greatest composers. Her singing is a series of cabinet tone-pictures, and there is no exaggeration in the unbounded enthusiasm it arouses in her hearers." Signor Vittorio Carpi, who made no inconsiderable mark in the metropolis last summer, as a baritone singer *di primo cartello*, has been starring at Rome in a highly brilliant manner. The Roman newspapers mention his acting and vocalisation alike in terms of unqualified praise.

Should Colonel Mapleson be enabled to keep his word with respect to Italian opera in London during the 1887 season, we shall probably hear Signor Carpi in two or three of his best parts at Covent Garden or Her Majesty's. I hear great things of his *Rigoletto*, and do not doubt, in his case, that the rich promise of the concert-room will be amply fulfilled in the theatre. Marcella Sembrich, too, has carried all before her at Berlin, whence letters reach me full of her praises. I am assured that her superb voice has mellowed greatly since she was last heard in this country. Of all living *prime donne*, she is unquestionably the most accomplished and versatile musician, being every whit as fine a pianist and violinist as she is a vocalist. Like Adelina Patti and Minnie Hauk, moreover, she has the gift of tongues, and can sing a score of operatic parts in half-a-dozen European idioms. We shall hear her next spring, I hope, in opera, but if circumstances should render that impossible, she will give two grand concerts, probably at the Albert Hall. It will be interesting to the great London public to listen to the performances of a beautiful woman, not yet thirty years of age, who in the course of a musical *matinée* will sing, "Ah! non giunge," and play Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and Chopin's Grand Polonaise for the pianoforte with equal brilliancy of execution. Madame de Hesse-Wartegg (Minnie Hauk) is also expected in London early next year, and it is her present intention to spend the greater part of the 1887 season on the left bank of the Thames. M. Joseph Wienawski has produced his new overture to "Guillaume le Taciturne," at the Grand Harmonie, in Brussels. This important work, constructed on classical lines, has made a profound impression in Belgian musical circles. It attempts to describe in sound the lofty character of the great statesman and patriot, who fell a victim to his steadfast Liberalism. The overture is spoken of in the Brussels press as a "remarkable psychological study;" "a virile work, instinct with strong dramatic character, teeming with striking contrasts, and altogether free from commonplace contrivances;" "a thrilling musical episode, replete with rich colour and vigorous life." As M. Wienawski is not a Belgian, these laudatory mentions of his latest composition for the orchestra cannot be dictated by local patriotism; and are therefore probably well founded. I hope that Mr. Manns, Mr. Henschel—or haply, Dr. Richter himself—will soon let us hear the "Vorspiel" to "William the Silent," in London.

Amongst the new vocal music forwarded to me for notice during the past month, are three songs and a duet by that fertile and agreeable composer, Signor L. Denza, who has added to the long list of settings already published of Thomas Moore's well-known words, "Oh! Abyssinian Tree." Signor Denza's "Song of the Nubian Girl" (Boosey and Co.) is melodious, sad, and sufficiently Oriental in character to engage the musician's attention without distressing his ear. "Down the Stream," the text of which is by Mr. William Boosey, is a pretty and quite unpretentious duet for soprano and tenor, well written for both

voices, and therefore easy to sing. Concert-room singers will do well to add it to their repertoire. "Play to Me" (E. Ascherberg & Co.), and "Sing to Me" (J. B. Cramer & Co.) are drawing-room ballads of a highly approved pattern. Sung in tune and with expression, they are sure to bring abundant kudos to their executants, as well as to their composer. Signor Denza sets English words uncommonly well for an Italian, and there is always some wholesome straightforward melody in his compositions for the voice. Mr. Ernest Birch has very pleasantly let some bright *vers de société*, written by Mr. Clement Scott, and intitled "Maidenhead Bridge." This song, which is published by Messrs. Hopkinson, of New Bond Street, and dedicated to Mrs. Morell Mackenzie, makes a fair and cheerful bid for popularity. A "Pilgrim's March and Even-Song" (C. Jeffreys) by Mr. F. W. Anson, a younger brother of the eminent comic actor, deserves kindly mention for its simple tunefulness and obvious spontaneity. In composing it, Mr. Anson has done well, and given promise of doing still better. From the Heidelberg publisher, G. Guttenberger, I have received two P.F. novelties by Cavaliere Eugenio Pirani, one of which—a Fughetta in A flat—is both clever and original, whilst the other—a Valse in G major—is singularly quaint and pretty. How cheap some of the music published in Germany is, compared with that offered by London firms to their customers! Both the compositions last referred to, although capitably printed and very tastefully got up, are priced at a mark apiece, the German equivalent of one shilling; that is to say, at exactly one-fourth of the figure that would have been recorded on their respective title-pages had they been published here.

THE BEGGAR STUDENT.

A Comic Opera, in three acts, produced at the Comedy Theatre on Monday, December 13th.

Music by Carl Millöcker. English Version by Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

Conductor, Mons. Auguste Van Biene.

Palmatica (Countess Novalska)	Mme. LUCY FRANKLIN.	Simon Romanovich ...	Mr. HENRY BRACY.
Laura	Miss ADA LINCOLN.	Conrad Møllitski (Count Opalinski)	Mr. JOHN CHILD.
Stephanie	Miss ELINOR LOVEDAY.	Schnapps	Mr. J. WEALANDS.
Col. Ollendorf	Mr. FRED MERVIN.	Onuphie	Mr. ARTHUR WATTS.
Ensign Richtoffen	Miss JENNIE WILTON.		

This charming opera has at length been presented to the public in its entirety at the Comedy Theatre, and with all the success to which its musical and dramatic merits fully entitle it. When it was originally produced at the Alhambra in April, 1884, it suffered severely from more than one heavy drawback imposed upon it by the management of that theatre, the great size of which, moreover, militated against the effectiveness of the vocal soli, and prevented the dialogue from being heard by at least three-fourths of the audience. Mr. Holland, to whom the *mise-en-scène* of the "Beggar Student" was entrusted, regarded the opera as a spectacular show, the music and plot of which were mere pegs whereon to hang gorgeous displays of shapely limbs and polychromatic, but exiguous costumes. To make room for the ballets in which this experienced purveyor for the London public believed with an undivided faith, he cut out musical numbers, dramatic situations, and

congruous dialogue in blocks, rendering the story of the piece curiously unintelligible; turning it, in fact, into a pantomime, minus the horse-play, the mechanical tricks, and the topical songs. He introduced jugglers and acrobats into the second act; he gave the title *rôle* to a clever little lady, famous for jig-dancing; he confided speaking parts of great importance to the development of the "intrigue" to comely but illiterate females, whose English was as deformed as their figures were symmetrical; in short, he played the mischief with Milloecker's masterpiece to such an extent that it was simply unrecognisable by any one who had heard it performed in Vienna or Berlin.

After the "Beggar Student" had been withdrawn from the Alhambra boards, it was performed in its original form by the Carl Rosa Company in the provinces, where it was received with marked favour by the public, and proved a remunerative recruit to the repertoire of that admirable impresa. A few months ago, an arrangement was concluded between Mr. Rosa and Captain Bainbridge, in virtue of which the latter gentleman produced the opera at one of the great provincial cities, and took it round the country with such highly satisfactory results that he was encouraged to rent a West-End theatre, bring his company to the metropolis, and re-introduce the "Beggar Student" to the London public as a hopeful candidate for popularity. The experiment was a bold one, but Captain Bainbridge took every feasible measure to render it successful. He secured the services of thoroughly capable artists for all the singing parts; he dressed them tastefully and picturesquely; he engaged an efficient orchestra, under the able leadership of Mr. Van Biene. The members of his company had played the piece together so often, as the saying is, that they "knew it backwards." Consequently, the opera, on the occasion of its reproduction in the pretty little Panton Street theatre, was given with a completeness seldom attained at London *premieres*, and fairly took the audience by storm. It never lagged or halted for a moment; not a hitch accrued in the action or dialogue; number after number of the charming music was warmly re-demanded, and the close of each act was signalised by hearty outbursts of enthusiastic applause.

Mr. Henry Bracy has for several years past steadfastly sustained a well-earned reputation as the most capable and trustworthy of all the English tenor singers whose gifts have been displayed in connection with comic opera and operetta. He is an accomplished vocalist and painstaking actor, endowed by nature with a correct ear, excellent taste and discretion, an infallible memory, and a singularly prepossessing appearance. It has always given me pleasure to hear him sing and see him act; but I am free to confess that, in my humble opinion, the part of Simon Romanovich suits him better in every respect than any other *rôle* which he has sustained within my cognisance. As the reckless young adventurer who lends himself to the perpetration of a colossal practical joke, prompted by sheer animal spirits; as the ardent lover and fervent patriot, ready to atone for his follies by the sacrifice of his life, Mr. Bracy exhibited dramatic intelligence of a very high order. The sympathies of

his audience were with him from the moment of his first entrance in the prison-yard, where he appears sordidly attired, and unmistakably "under a cloud," to that of his final triumph, when his devotion to his country is rewarded by a title of nobility and a handsome fortune. Mr. Mervin's impersonation of the vengeful but humorous braggart, Ollendorff, was a masterpiece of comic acting. His bye-play, though absolutely free from actual or suggested vulgarity, kept the house in roars of laughter whenever he was on the stage; he made every point in his share of the dialogue tell with full effect, and sang his music unexceptionably. Nearly all the broad fun of the piece falls to Ollendorff's share; the part is a very fatiguing one, calling for no inconsiderable physical exertion on the part of the actor to whom it is confided, and Mr. Mervin sustained it throughout with inimitable *verve*. The small grotesque rôle of Onuphrie was cleverly played by Mr. Watts, and Mr. Wealands gave a bluff, eminently cheerful rendering of Schnapps, the venal, but placable gaoler. Of Mr. Child, whom I saw and heard for the first time, in the part of Conrad Malitski, it may with justice be said that he is an invaluable acquisition to the comic-operative stage. His voice is a high tenor of beautiful quality and great power; he sings perfectly in tune, and with unaffected feeling; he speaks well, and acts intelligently.

All three ladies to whom the female rôles in the "Beggar Student" have been judiciously assigned are skilful vocalists and accomplished actresses. The part of Laura is a one, at once fatiguing, declamatory, and highly ornate; its adequate rendering calls for a combination of power and execution rarely possessed by *prime donne* of comic opera. Miss Lincoln's vocal resources, however, appear inexhaustible, whilst her floriture are remarkably neat and accurate. She sang Laura's grand *scena* leading up to the finale of the first act with infinite spirit and brilliancy, and distinguished herself no less conspicuously in the lengthy and difficult solo assigned to her in the opening scene of Act II. In all the concerted music, some of which is by no means easy, she was as steady as a rock and as tuneful as a lark. Mrs. H. Loveday, who infused a good deal of sprightly humour into the part of Stephania—the "greedy girl"—has been carefully trained in a sound school of vocalisation, and makes good use of the knowledge she has acquired by arduous study. In her second dress she looked delightfully picturesque. Miss Lucy Franklein is an experienced singer and actress; whatever she has to do she always does well. It is long since I have seen so finished a performance as her interpretation of the reduced Countess Palmatica—proud but mean, haughty but cringing, poverty-stricken but ostentatious—a veritable chef-d'œuvre of high-comedy acting.

And what pretty music! There are two trios for female voices of which no musician could ever weary, so daintily are they phrased and so cleverly constructed. Both the love-duets are compositions of a very high class, teeming with original melody, and admirably written for the voices. Herr Milloecker's *ensembles*, one and all, are strong and stirring, and one or two reveal great ingenuity in the blending of different

motivi into a harmonious whole. One of the gems of the opera is a bridal chorus for soprani and contralti, the simple tender melody of which has haunted me ever since I first heard it. Great credit is due to Captain Bainbridge's chorists, who have an arduous task to fulfil in the "Beggar Student," for their intelligent singing and perfect truth of intonation. The riotous chorus and extravagant dance of the emancipated gaol-birds—Simon Romanovich's whilom fellow-prisoners—who break in upon the wedding-celebrations in Act II., were superbly given; nothing more grotesque and laughter-moving has been seen on any London stage for many a long day. I had well-nigh forgotten to pay a well-merited tribute of praise to Miss Jenny Wilton, who plays the part of a military Adonis with a dashing grace that is quite irresistible, and who is so good-looking that one cannot help wondering how it is that she is so clever. This pretty and piquante young lady is by no means the least attractive feature of a performance which, for all-round excellence, has seldom been equalled and never surpassed, within my remembrance, by any comic opera company which has heretofore played in the metropolis.

CLAVICHORD.



Our Play-Box.

"MY BONNY BOY."

A Farceical Comedy, in three acts, by T. G. WARREN.

Produced at the Criterion Theatre, on Thursday afternoon, December 2, 1886.

Benjamin Boulter, Esq. ...	Mr. WILLIAM BLAKELEY.	Damper	Mr. J. R. SHERMAN.
George Boulter	Mr. J. H. DARNLEY.	Mrs. Benjamin Boulter ...	Mrs. BICKERSTAFF.
George Mildacre	Mr. GEORGE GIDDENS.	Mr. George Boulter	Miss FROLIOTT PAOET.
Harry Hopleton	Mr. J. C. BUCKSTONE.	Hetty	Miss ANNIE HUOHES.
John	Mr. W. STAVELEY.	Mary	Miss SCOTT.
X 92	Mr. E. PERCY.		

This pleasant piece had, at least, the merit of exciting the exuberant hilarity of the audience, and certainly increased the "public stock of harmless pleasure." The *imbroglio* arose out of the expected return of the son of a suburban family from the colonies, and a disreputable tuner being despatched from "Bronswood and Broadmead's"—an amusing combination for a pianoforte firm—arriving about the same time, is mistaken for the desired youth, greeted affectionately, and invited to stay in the house to his own astonishment; and naturally—at least, according to dramatic law—the son is treated as a tuner, and loaded with obloquy, and, indeed, is carried off by the police violently in the attitude known as the "Frog's March." All which was carried through with unbounded spirit by two admirable actors—Blakeley and Giddens, who appeared under quite unexpected conditions, and displayed an exuberance that was really surprising. Giddens showed an unctuous and pliant humour—the smug self-sufficiency and enjoyment of a low fellow

suddenly introduced to a higher sphere—thus taking leave, for the nonce, of his usual rather aggrieved and persecuted rôle in which we commonly find him. This proves that an occasional change of part acts as a tonic, and is indeed necessary to the good player, who is liable to become stereotyped in one form of character. It was developed with extraordinary detail and fun. Blakeley, who is one of the rare comedians that have an original manner of their own, like the flavour of a particular sauce, was singularly entertaining, from his genuineness, his ferocity as the “Testy Father,” his eye rolling in a perpetual frenzy. He has quite a Buckstonian manner, and has something of the twang of the original. How excellent was his surprise and indignation when he received the intelligence that the tuner—his assumed son—was married (“Of course he was!”), and the desperate cross-examination that followed. The characters were played with much spirit, and the whole had been well rehearsed. Of course there were faults. It was too much drawn out, and might be compressed. An old treasurer of Drury Lane, one Dunn, would never witness a first performance, yet always gave the same criticism—“Wants cutting.” This piece wants cutting, and then would make an excellent introduction to the Criterion bill of fare. One should not look gift-horses too closely in the mouth, and we are always debtors to the universal providers of hearty laughs. They are benefactors of the species. The notion of the tuner, however, has been used before, and I recall a piece at the Vaudeville, called “Les Grandes Demoiselles,” in which a gentleman visitor is taken for the tuner and *vice versa*, the tuner for the gentleman. The young ladies, matrimonially inclined, loaded the tuner with attentions and treated the youth with scorn. There was an incongruity in the returned son being taken for the gardener or the tuner, he being too resplendently attired. Now, he might be represented as having been unlucky in his colonial experience, or as reduced to poverty, and thus might present himself in shabby attire. This would make the mistake more natural.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

THE BUTLER.

A New and Original “Domestic Comedy,” in three acts, by Mr. and Mrs. HERMAN MERIVALE.

Produced, for the first time in London, at Toole’s Theatre, on Monday, December 6, 1886.

David Trot... ..	Mr. J. L. TOOLE.	A Deaf Flyman... ..	Mr. W. BRUNTON.
Sir John Tracey, Kt. ...	Mr. JOHN BILLINGTON.	Lady Tracey	Miss EMILY THORNE.
Laurence Tracey	Mr. E. D. WARD,	Alice Marshall	Miss MARIE LINDEN.
Lord Babilcombe	Mr. G. SHELTON.	Lady Anne Babilcombe ...	Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH.
Frank St. John... ..	Mr. C. LOWNE.	Lavinia Muddle	Miss KATE PHILLIPS.

Mr. Toole and his company, not forgetting his trusty aide-de-camp, Mr. George Loveday, have returned to town from “collecting their rents” in the country, and furnished with a new piece, the work of Mr. and Mrs. H. Merivale. This announced collaboration of husband and wife is somewhat of a new departure, and may be fruitful in the future. “The Butler” was the cause of much enjoyment and amusement through its course, and there was a hearty sympathetic feeling exhibited by the audience, who were glad to see their old favourite again. The farcical

piece was constructed on old lines. The retired "grocer" in France is a storehouse of inexhaustible comedy. Mr. Toole has shown us all he knows in this department in his departed friend Byron's "Upper Crust," and other pieces. Here he shows himself as the old family servant with all the oddities of that faithful but tyrannous retainer. We must make faint protest, however, against the introduction of a jest antique as the retainer himself, and at which, like Diggory's "Grouse in the Gun-room," we have laughed these twenty years—viz., the well-known reply to a notice of parting, "An' wha' th' deil does yer 'anner mianc to gang?"—for it is of Scotch and pawky extraction. There is an extraordinary incident too—the master of the house trying to arrange a marriage between a pretty young girl who resides in the house and this very butler! This scheme he prosecutes seriously, with many confidential nudges and assurances of "You shan't leave the house alone." The droll menial it is found impossible to dislodge, and after many ingenious complications no less than three happy and well-assorted marriages are the result, and the butler obtains the object of his affections—no other than the vivacious Miss Kate Phillips.

This piece will suit Mr. Toole and his company, on the whole, after being duly "touched on" in successive performances. It must be said, however, that it lacks spontaneousness and is rather artificial in its incidents and humour—in this contrasting with the late Byron's practised workmanship. It shows how fruitful in character is comedy, when in this single form of character to which Mr. Toole is so partial, we can find such variations as a waiter, the retired waiter or butler, the butler retired and set up as a gentleman, the greengrocer-waiter, and others. All these are of the same family—wear that peculiar "choking" sort of stock, of which Mr. Toole has the patent—the short swallow-tailed coat and brass buttons and the tightened pantaloons. The other characters were suitably cast and adequately performed. They were really little more than sketches, and did not overtax the ability of the respective players. Mr. Ward is so distinctly associated with characters of a grotesque type that it becomes difficult to realise him as a sentimental lover, much tried and suffering. Miss Thorne supplied a performance which, like certain port, had "a round nutty flavour," without, however, any ambitious pretensions. There were two other ladies, new recruits, who were welcome, but on different grounds. The first, Miss Kate Philips, a spirited conscientious actress, always giving her best work, saucy as becoming a titular "chambermaid," yet measured in her sauciness, and lighting up, as it were, any play to which she brings her service. There are the pleasantest recollections of her in "Money," when she played with Thorne—dismallest of Graves. The other addition was Miss Violet Vanbrugh, a name of happy theatric omen, whether assumed or otherwise—a lady of decidedly handsome person and pleasing manner.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

"THE FRIAR."

Written by Mr. J. COMYNS CARR. Music by ALFRED J. CALDICOTT, Mus. Bac.
Produced at St. George's Hall, on Wednesday, December 15, 1886.

The Lady Isabel...	Miss FANNY HOLLAND.	Abbot Imbert ...	Mr. SAINT MATTHEWS.
Lina (a Milkmaid) ...	Miss MARION WARDROPER.	Lord of Clare ...	Mr. ALFRED REED.
Hubert (a Shepherd)	Mr. NORTH HOME.		

A new form of entertainment has sprung up in the old Gallery of Illustration—a pastoral breathing shepherd's sighs and maiden's love on the soft Spring breeze that our ears might fancy is stirring the leaves of the mimic orchard. It is not an unwelcome change to go back for a brief half-hour to the fifteenth century with its quaint attire and speech, its odour of knightly chivalry and romance, its picturesque and poetical air, and we can sit and wonder vaguely why, with the advance of civilisation, it has been found necessary to rob our age of the simplicity and peace which characterised that of long ago. Shepherds are out of fashion, and knights all dead and gone; romance is obsolete, and love transformed to a marketable commodity that has no relationship with the love of olden days. We have little patience with sentiment, and absolutely no time to practise it; but all the same, it is pleasant to sit and watch some creatures of the past, though we know them only to be puppets, and dreamily imagine ourselves for once in that sylvan orchard with no bustle, no roar, no world to fret us, listening to the pleasant wit, the quaint conceit, the simple love, and feeling that the struggles and work of the nineteenth century have—thanks to Mr. Comyns Carr and Mr. Alfred Caldicott—vanished for a time beneath such a graceful and peaceful influence.

The plot of "The Friar" is infinitesimal, bearing a slight resemblance at first to "Sweethearts," inasmuch as Lina, a milkmaid of the period, refuses to realise that her shepherd-lover Hubert (by the way, this name was constantly changed to Conrad during performance) is earnest and sincere, and treats him in a cold and cruel manner. The Lady Isabel pleads for him in vain; she has learned by bitter experience how foolish it is to sport with love, for her proud knight rode sadly away from her six weary years ago, and has not yet returned; and despite the fact that Hubert joins his voice to hers, Lina remains obdurate and leaves him, having first sung her part in a charming trio, "Oh, Love that came but yester-eve." Left alone with Hubert, Lady Isabel sings to him a lesson of what Cupid would do in these circumstances, and finds a most apt pupil. She undertakes to teach him if he will follow her commands; he promises and goes, and then there comes the Abbot and his guest—a worthy Friar—who chat over the ruby wine and discuss the world. Of course the Lady Isabel discovers in this Friar her love of six years ago, and hiding behind a pillar, listens to some bitter words about herself, little thinking that the Friar has seen her, and is delivering them for her benefit entirely. The Abbot espouses the Lady Isabel's cause, and

indeed combats his guest warmly on the wickedness of the world, proving that he has had as wide experience thereof as his reverend brother. Then re-enter Hubert, who, at the Abbot's command, shows from whence the shepherd gathers the ready song that ever lives on his lips. The Friar expresses his cynicism in Latin, and wagers the Abbot that Hubert will part with the golden bell which has just been handed to him for the morrow's festival. The Abbot defends his *protégé*, and then departs, leaving the Friar alone, who, tired of masquerading, kicks off his monk's habit, and reveals himself the Lord of Clare. He then rehearses a little comedy with his staff and gown, in which he shows how the Lady Isabel will bow low before him, and is unaware that the lady herself, disguised as a peasant, is watching and hearing every word. Returning after awhile, he meets this peasant, and then hears a sorry tale—the Lady Isabel and Hubert love one another, and his comedy will never be played. Plunged in disappointment and grief, he meets Lina, already repentant of her hasty words. Thereupon an explanation follows, and she being warned against her faithless love, they retire to mature some plan. Hubert comes in alone to wait for the Lady Isabel, who has bidden him meet her; and after telling the Abbot where he has put the golden bell, he eases his heavy heart in song. This ballad is the prettiest piece of the little pastoral, both music and words being charming, and it was sung by Mr. North Home with expression and finish. Of course, the plot ends happily and the lovers are united, but not before a vigorous and excellent quartet has been sung, and the curtain falls on the couples dancing merrily, the Abbot standing beneficent and bland in the background. Mr. Alfred Reed, as the Lord of Clare, kept the laughter going, despite his terrible cold; he might, perhaps, have looked a trifle more knightly, but this deficiency had no effect on his success with the audience. Miss Marion Wardroper, Miss Fanny Holland, and Mr. Sant Matthews (who looked comically like Mr. Arthur Roberts as the Abbot) all worked well and received a hearty and unanimous call at the end of the piece. The entertainment concluded with Mr. Corney Grain's funny account of his "Taking the Waters."

"THE NOBLE VAGABOND."

A new and original "Romantic Drama" in Four Acts, by Henry Arthur Jones.
Produced at the Princess's Theatre on Wednesday, December 22, 1886.

Ralph Lester	Mr. CHARLES WARNER.	Blind Billy	Mr. WALTERS.
Sir Godfrey Deveson...	Mr. JOHN BEAUCHAMP.	Grandfather Corby ...	Mr. HENRY ESMOND.
Joseph Scorier	Mr. JULIAN CROSS.	Busby	Mr. R. SHAW.
Ralph Scorier	Mr. C. CARTWRIGHT.	Mr. Spudge	Mr. M. BYRNES.
Dick Vimpany	Mr. GEORGE BARRETT.	Mr. Pawkins	Mr. C. EAST.
Alfy Baldock	Mr. ALFRED B. PHILLIPS.	Hop-o'-my-Thumb ...	Master TUCKER.
Asaph Prospect	Mr. FUJION DOWSE.	Maude Deveson	Miss DOROTHY DENE.
Jarnabel Prospect ...	Mr. L. MERRICK.	Mary Lester	Miss BELLA TITHERADGE.
Toby Sprout... ..	Mr. E. TURNER.	Dinah Vimpany	Miss ANNIE HUGHES.
Tuffin	Mr. A. HOLLES.	Mrs. Vimpany	Miss C. EWELL.
Hawker	Mr. E. W. THOMAS.	Servant	Miss Barton.

There is nothing new under the sun, and it would be expecting too much, perhaps, to look for strict originality now-a-days in the matter of dramatic work. A new, interesting, and impressive idea for a play

is a great rarity, and is not always at hand. "The Noble Vagabond" is the first drama of its kind, which has been produced by Mr. Henry A. Jones without the aid of a *collaborateur*, and by it Mr. Jones; presumably, means to stand or fall. In respect to novelty of idea Mr. Jones can hardly claim much credit. The story is familiar to every frequenter of the melo-dramatic theatres. It is, in point of fact, a very old story indeed, and it portrays most rigidly the old stage maxim that virtue is always rewarded, and villainy as surely punished. This, however, is not of so much consequence as the carrying out of the dramatic scheme and the depicting of the various characters. Let us, then, see how far Mr. Jones has succeeded in this respect.

We are in the morning room of Maplebury House, the residence of Sir Godfrey Deveson, the local magistrate. A strolling player, Ralph Lester, has been very properly arrested for entering a tradesman's shop, and walking off with a loaf and cheese. A romantic interest has been suddenly awakened by him in the breast of Sir Godfrey's daughter, Maude, who pleads with her father and obtains the vagabond's release. Ralph, it then transpires, is Sir Godfrey's nephew, and is supposed to be illegitimate. He is set free, and Sir Godfrey tells his child that he is mortgaged up to the hilt, and that there is no means of averting his financial ruin save one—she must marry Ralph Scorier, the son of Joseph Scorier, an old fellow who is drinking himself to death in a lonely house near the Black Copse. As Sir Godfrey explains the situation, he sees its horror, and leaves his daughter in order to visit Scorier. Maude, fearing some trouble, follows him and, after a front scene introducing Dick Vimpany, the manager of the booth to which Ralph Lester belongs, we pass to "Joseph Scorier's den." Here old Scorier, more nearly resembling a beast than a man, is visited, first of all, by Sir Godfrey Deveson, who leaves him after vainly pleading with him, and then by Lester, whom he mistakes for his own son. In his delirium he tells Lester that his mother was married to Sir Godfrey's brother, and that he is not Ralph Lester, but Ralph Deveson, the heir to the Maplebury estates. Then Ralph Scorier arrives, quarrels with his father, and shoots him, the murder having an unknown witness in the person of Ralph Deveson's mother, who has been confined for years by Scorier, who keeps her in a hole in his cottage. The murderer escapes, taking with him his father's money. Maude Deveson, in search of her father, then enters, and finds the lifeless body of old Scorier. She immediately concludes that her father is the murderer, and she is still in the dark room when Ralph Deveson returns. She escapes, but not before she is recognised by Ralph, whose hands she has smeared accidentally with blood, and who thinks she has done the vile deed. This act, it will be seen, is not lacking in incident or surprise. Whether such incident and surprise are quite allowable is another question. But there is no denying the theatrically effective conclusion to this act.

The opening of the second act shows the yard of the Dewdrop Inn,

where a set of impertinent bumpkins determine to "rout out" old Scorer. Their intention is learned by Ralph Deveson, who gets his friend, the showman, to stay the visit of these fellows until he can see Miss Deveson and invent a plan to prevent the discovery of the murder. When the gang arrive at Scorer's den they break open the door and call lustily for the old man, who appears and rates them pretty roundly for their untimely visit. Of course, the old man is no other than Ralph Deveson, who has disguised himself, a ruse which presents a very good opportunity for the actor, but which is tricky and commonplace at best.

The third act opens with a very good scene, in which hero and heroine declare their love for each other, and in which Ralph Deveson learns that his cousin is innocent of the murder of which she suspects her father to be guilty. Ralph's mother, having escaped from Scorer's clutches, is harboured by the show folk, to whom she relates her wrongs. The concluding scene of this act is the representation of a country fair, with all its paraphernalia of jugglers, acrobats, swings, and even a realistic fight between men armed with boxing-gloves. Old Scorer reappears, and is hustled by the crowd. To make matters worse, the showman urges the people to lynch the man for his cruelty to Mary Lester—Ralph's mother—and, in the struggle, the disguise is torn from Ralph Deveson, who is charged by the real murderer, Ralph Scorer, with Joseph Scorer's death, and handed over to the police. The manner in which this conclusion is brought about is not only ineffective but highly improbable, since no man who is playing for a great stake would venture into a crowd disguised in wig and beard, powder and paint. The last of the four acts presents the inevitable conclusion in plays of this class. Sir Godfrey Deveson, who has been absent from Maplebury since the murder, returns, and makes restitution to his nephew, while the murderer is found in possession of some bank notes which belonged to his father, and is handed over to justice.

From this detailed account of the story it will be seen that the play contains little originality of invention, and that its incidents are greatly exaggerated. Its hero is nothing if not blustering, and the other characters are not much better than the ordinary conventional type to be found in dozens of melo-dramas. "The Noble Vagabond" is not an artistic play by any means and it certainly can never be even a popular one. The scenery, painted by Mr. Walter Hann, is all that could be desired, the opening scene of the third act—a lovely set, representing a country corner, with its trees, and bridge, and brook—and the last scene of all—the terrace of Maplebury House—being particularly beautiful stage pictures.

Mr. Charles Warner has so much real energy and power that he can afford to dispense with all show and bombast. He should display more strength and earnestness, and fewer smiles and other affectations. Such a part as Ralph Lester must be acted with a deadly

earnestness and belief if it is to impress the spectator. Miss Dorothy Dene makes an interesting heroine, but she has much to learn ere she can become a fit and proper representative of a melo-dramatic heroine. Her acting is totally devoid of light and shade. She plays in one key throughout the piece. The popular George Barrett as the showman has a part unworthy of his comic genius, and pretty Miss Annie Hughes might well have been seen in a character worth the acting of it. Mr. Charles Cartwright is an admirable villain—determined, cool, and incisive. He has a perfect grasp of the character, and, consequently, his impersonation tells greatly. Mr. John Beauchamp is quiet, gentlemanly, and easy as the wicked, but repentant baronet.

A. B.

“MONTE CHRISTO, JR.”

A Burlesque Melo-drama, in Three Acts, by Richard Henry.

Produced at the Gaiety Theatre on Thursday, December 23, 1886.

Edmund Dantes	MISS NELLY FARREN	Noirtier	MR. FRED LESLIE.
Fernand	MISS FAY TEMPLETON.	De Villefort	MR. E. J. LONNEN.
Mercedes	MISS AGNES DELAPORTE.	Danglars	MR. GEORGE HONEY.
Albert	MISS JENNY McNULTY.	Caderouse	MR. GEORGE STONE.
Valentine	MISS BIRDIE IRVING.	Morel	MR. W. GUISE.
Babette	MISS LIZZIE WILSON.	Old Dantes	MR. ALFRED BALFOUR.
Carconte	MISS BILLIE BARLOW.	B y at the wheel	CHARLIE ROSS.
Mariette	MISS LOTTIE COLLINS.	Captain of Hussars	MISS FLORENCE BEALE.
Victorine	MISS SYLVIA GREY.		

The new Gaiety burlesque-melodrama is a distinct advance upon anything of the kind that has lately been seen. It is no ordinary show of shapely girls or a repetition of the latest music-hall tunes, but an entertainment as light, bright, exhilarating, and harmless as could be desired. It is of too fanciful a nature to be classed with ordinary burlesque, but all the same it is vastly amusing and commendably clever. Miss E. Farren and Mr. F. Leslie are happily provided with parts which suit them wonderfully well, but these able artists act with unwonted energy, resource, and complete success. The scenery of Messrs. Beverley, Perkins, Banks, and Telbin is as magnificent as need be, and the costumes, designed by Mr. Percy Anderson, are triumphs of elegance in every respect. It is impossible to judge the exact value of the “book” as yet, since the author’s text was not printed on the first night, and it is beyond the bounds of possibility for the most practised ear to detect what is said on the stage on the first night of a production like this. But it may safely be said of Mr. “Richard Henry” that he has provided an extravaganza of unusual brilliancy of idea and construction, which affords ample opportunity for the exhibition of the talents of the actor and singer, the dancer, the scenic artist, and the costumier. Mr. Geo. Edwardes may be congratulated on the success which he has secured for the Gaiety Theatre by courage and a liberal expenditure of money, and Mr. Charles Harris, who has produced the piece, has once more proved himself a more than ordinarily efficient stage-manager. Miss

Nellie Farren as the hero has seldom been seen to so much advantage, Her reception on the first night was enthusiastic in the extreme, and went far to prove the great esteem in which she is held by her audience. Miss Farren more than justified the good opinion in which she is held by her indefatigable energy, her genuine humour, and, occasionally, the intensity of her acting. There was a Robsonian touch about her performance at the conclusion of the first act, when Dantes is arrested on his wedding morning, and carried off to the dungeon of the Chateau d'If. Miss Farren's Monte Christo in one of her cleverest and most successful impersonations. Great praise is also in store for Mr. Fred Leslie, whose Noirtier, the conspirator, places him in the very first rank of burlesque artists. His impersonation throughout is conceived in the best spirit of fun. Mr. Leslie is especially successful in a dance with Miss Farren in the second act, and in a song, in the last act, in which he imitates, with a striking and marvellous fidelity, and exquisite suggestion, several popular actors. A hit was also made by a clever little actress from America, Miss Fay Templeton, who has a quiet sense of humour. She sings with good taste a song similar to Mr. Henry E. Dixey's "It's English, you know."

A. B.

"ALICE IN WONDERLAND."

A Musical Dream Play, in two acts, by H. SAVILE CLARKE, Music by Walter Slaughter.
Produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, on Thursday afternoon, December 23, 1886.

Act I.

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND.

Alice	Miss PHEBE CARLO.
White Rabbit	Master D. ABRAHAMS.
Caterpillar	Master S. SOLOMON.
Duchess	Miss FLORENCE LEVEY.
Cook	Miss ANNA ABRAHAMS.
Cheshire Cat	Master CHARLES ADESON.
Hatter	Mr. SIDNEY HARCOURT.
Hare	Master EDOAR NORTON.
Dormouse	Miss DOROTHY D'ALCOURT.
King of Hearts	Master STEPHEN ADESON.
Queen of Hearts	Mdlle. ROSA.
Jack of Hearts	Miss KITTY ABRAHAMS.
Executioner	Mr. H. H. CAMERON.
Gryphon	Mr. CHARLES BOWLAND.
Mock Turtle	Mr. WILLIAM CHEESMAN.

Act II.

THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS.

Alice	Miss PHEBE CARLO.
White King	Mr. SIDNEY HARCOURT.
White Queen	Miss KITTY ABRAHAMS.
The Carpenter	Mr. H. H. CAMERON.
White Knight	Master STEPHEN ADESON.
Lily	Miss FLORENCE LEVEY.
Rose	Mdlle. ROSA.
Red Queen	Miss MABEL LOVE.
Red King	Mdlle. ROSA.
Red Knight	Master D. ABRAHAMS.
...	Master C. KITTs.
Tweedledum	Mr. JOHN ETTINSON.
Tweedledee	Mr. WILLIAM CHEESMAN.
Humpty Dumpty	Mr. C. BOWLAND.
The Walrus	Mr. CHARLES ADESON.
Lion	Master S. SOLOMON.
Unicorn	Mr. EDOAR NORTON.
Hare	Master HOOD.
Leg of Mutton	Miss D. D'ALCOURT.
Plum Pudding ... ..	...

Mr. Savile Clarke has achieved a wonderful and surprising success; he has given the little folk this winter a genuine children's pantomime and founded it upon that marvellous and delightful book, of which no one ever grows weary, "Alice in Wonderland." There was not a little excitement and curiosity as to how this venture would turn out, but the hearty applause and shouts of laughter which greeted the first performance on Thursday afternoon, December 23, must have convinced the most confirmed Didymus that the idea was as

good as it was happy. "Alice in Wonderland" will not appeal to the children alone, it will be patronised, and largely too, by the older members of the community, unless I am very much mistaken, who will go to join their laughter with the youngsters, and appreciate once again the simple, yet subtle, wit of Lewis Carroll's inimitable work. Considering the difficulty he laboured under in giving a concise representation, Mr. Savile Clark has done wonders. The story runs glibly, opening with a chorus of fairies surrounding Alice asleep in a chair beneath a tree, from there we progress splendidly, making a new acquaintance with all our old friends, the White Rabbit, the Caterpillar, the Duchess with her Baby, the Cook with her reckless use of pepper, the Cheshire Cat with his remarkable smile, the Hatter, the Hare, and the Dormouse, who have their perpetual tea party, and treat Alice to conundrums and unconventional rudeness. Then comes a long and brilliant procession, which should fill Alice's heart with awe, if not with admiration, but our heroine is nothing daunted by this large crowd. "Why, they're only a pack of cards," she says, "I needn't be afraid of them?" and so she answers the sanguinary-minded Queen of Hearts, in a reckless manner, and refuses to see heads knocked off in such profusion. She then dances with the Cards in a graceful gavotte, and afterwards protects her old friend, the Cheshire Cat, from an undeserved execution. The Gryphon and Mock Turtle then appear, and Alice receives some hints as to a sea education, and the first act of the dream play for children ends with the trial of the Knave of Hearts for eating the tarts, in which Alice's verdict of acquittal is unanimously passed.

In the second act, Mr. Savile Clarke takes us to another book, "Through the Looking-glass," and Alice is introduced to the Chessmen and Chorus, who dance stiffly for her delectation, then the Red Queen gives her some advice after she has spoken to the live flowers, and Tweedledum and Tweedledee appear. She soon makes friends with these massive twins, and pleads hard when they determine to have a mortal combat, but all to no purpose, and so after she has witnessed the greedy Carpenter and Walrus devour their daily portion of oysters, she assists in arming Tweedledum and Tweedledee for the fray. The arrival of a Crow sends the warriors to speedy flight, and Humpty Dumpty appears on his wall, and so the play goes on until we see Alice once more asleep in her chair, and hear her wake to say, "Oh! I've had such a curious dream!"

The play is beautifully mounted, and splendidly acted, Miss Phoebe Carlo being very successful as the little heroine. That so young a child should remember the long part, is in itself a wonderful feat, but the young actress did more than this, she played in a delightful and thoroughly artistic fashion, and in this respect she was closely followed by a tiny mite, Miss Dorothy D'Alcourt, who played first the Dormouse, then an Oyster, and lastly, the Plum Pudding.

The celebrated Rosa troupe were to the fore in dancing, and a host of clever bright children worked hard to give their young brethren a treat. Mr. Edgar Bruce, Mr. Walter Slaughter (who has written some charming music for the piece), and Mr. Savile Clark, all deserve unstinted praise for their new venture at the Prince of Wales's Theatre.

E. R.



Our Omnibus=Box.

In order to gratify the request of many friends and subscribers, I was anxious to add a really good picture of Mrs. Kendal to our theatrical portrait gallery. A courteous letter was addressed to that lady, asking her permission for the portrait to appear. The following brief communication has been received in answer. Further comment is useless.

Dear Sir.

In reply to your
letter received today
I am very sorry I am
obliged to refuse
your request.
Yours faithfully
Mary Kendal

The charm ever present in the pages of Dr. Louis Engel's musical articles is more potent in his work from "Mozart to Mario." We have heard much of the metaphorical pudding, with the plums few and far between, but Dr. Engel errs in feeding us with a superfluity, inducing a species of mental dyspepsia. His brain is so fertile, that with him anecdote suggests epigram; epigram, reflection: and reflection a sigh or a smile as the case may be, and in this way he sometimes leads us from the point to bring us back with too sudden a run. Yet as an irregular face often fascinates us infinitely more than a strictly classical one, so is the irregularity of Dr. Engel's style but a redeeming vice after all. Sitting in the chair of criticism, he takes us into his confidence in the most delightful way, but whilst lifting the curtain aside from the private lives of Wagner, Chopin, Gounod, Patti, Nilsson, and many others, he can never be reproached with a want either of tact or discretion. Although impetuous, he can lay even claim to being a dispassionate critic. No one, for instance, could more fully appreciate than he the singular charm of Mme. Patti's singing, at once a miracle of art and of naturalness, yet this does not blind his eyes to the fact that Mdlle. Nilsson occasionally reaches heights unattempted by her quondam rival, notwithstanding the extravagances and *gaucheries*, so to speak, which frequently mar her efforts, and who, having once heard Marguerite's ringing laugh caught with a sob in that never-to-be-forgotten quartette in the garden scene of "Mefistofele;" or, truer to nature still, her broken accents of love, her passionate pain in the prison, can fail to agree with Dr. Engel? He argues it is true that Nilsson makes more effect in great situations, because she actually sympathises less with her part than Patti, but that her innate shrewdness and *sang-froid*, enable her to measure her *entente* better with her audience. Apart from his well-known ability as a critic, his wit, and buoyancy, Dr. Engel has a wonderful knack of telling us anecdotes, which have the almost unique merit of being new. His work may be said to stand out from the critical productions of many a day in power of observation, nature, and cultivated art.

Mr. Kirwan's third dramatic recital at the Marlborough rooms, December 4th, was but sparsely attended, owing to the bad weather. This evidently influenced the reciter, who, during the first half of the programme, instead of being quite absorbed in his work, scanned the audience critically, and was alive to their every movement. The items comprised in this first part were:—Clement Scott's poem, "The Midnight Charge"; "Marguerite," by Whittier; "The Blind Girl of Castel Cuillé," to which was appended the name of Longfellow only—an omission the American poet was never guilty of himself. "L'Abuglo de Castel Cuillé" is the creation of the Gascon poet, Jasmin. The English version is very unsatisfactory, but Longfellow attempted an almost impossible task in seeking to translate a poem written in Gascon—the old Langue Doc, so picturesque, so poetical, so full of imagery an

tenderness, and that is so loved by those few who are well acquainted with it. Such a piece is, therefore, not a good one to select; it has lost too much of its native hue to be interesting except as a faint reminiscence of the original. These three pieces were given by Mr. Kirwan in a decidedly affected manner, and his assumed voice was the reverse of effective. A scene from "Dan'l Druce" (Gilbert) fared much better though still touched with affectation; and throughout the several pieces the reciter used gestures that reminded one too forcibly of calisthenics. The second part of the programme proved far more satisfactory. Mr. Kirwan, by desire, substituted to "The Engineer's Story" "Phædra," from Lewis Morris's "Epic of Hades," already given at his first recital. There, for the first time during the afternoon, he gave free vent to his natural voice, which, in consequence, was far more effective; in this piece he showed power, dramatic feeling, and earnestness. This was followed by "Aspiring Miss de Laine," excellently rendered, Mr. Kirwan thoroughly entering into the spirit of Bret Harte's quaint humour. "A Bloomsbury Christening" (Dickens) was good, but not so good. The closing item, "Mr Zackbut's Costume" (Turner) was very successful. In comic pieces Mr. Kirwan discards his stilted gesture, to the great advantage of his recitation.

The Lyric Club gave its last entertainment of the season, on Thursday, December 9th. This probably accounted for the extraordinary number of people who crowded the rooms, and appeared thoroughly well pleased with the singing, the supper, and themselves. The soprani who contributed their share to the concert were Miss Amy Sherwin, Madlle. Badia, pretty Miss Marie Tempest, who sang divinely as she always does, Miss Adelaide Mullen, and Miss Edith Chester, who goes to take Miss Florence Dysart's place in "Dorothy," at the Prince of Wales's, but who cannot be said to have scored a success with her song on this particular occasion. Miss Alexandra Ehrenberg was the contralto, and of course was vociferously encored. Miss Ehrenberg's singing is always delightful; she is a thorough artist, and a sympathetic one into the bargain. Mr. Hadyn Coffin and Mr. Lawrence Kelly, Mr. George Giddens with a comic song, Mr. Theodore Liebe (violoncello), Mr. John Thomas (harp), and Mr. Ganz also gave their services, and with recitations from Miss Bessie Halton and Miss Bright, and a duologue from quaint little Miss Norreys and Mr. Bernard Gould made up the rest of the programme. Among the guests were the Duchess of Newcastle and Mr. Hohler, the Lady Mayoress, Lady Eardley, Lady Wetherall, Lady Ross, Lord Fitzwarren Chichester, the Hon. C. Cadogan, Miss Fortescue Harrison, Miss Hope Temple, Miss Emily Cross, and many others, social, artistic, and dramatic.

A *matinée musicale* was given by Mr. Carli (formerly known as Mr. Cattermole) on Friday afternoon, December 10th, at 175, New Bond Street, which consisted of a short concert, and an operatic recital

of the garden scene from "Faust." It was unfortunate, but true, that all the performers, with but two exceptions, were suffering from violent colds which naturally diminished the success that would have attended their efforts. The exceptions were, strange to say, the two tenors, Mr. Hirwen Jones, who possesses one of the purest and sweetest voices, and Mr. George Power, who sang the music of "Faust" not only delightfully but well. Mr. Carli has not improved. Two or three years ago he seemed to hold out promise of doing good work, but his voice has not fulfilled that promise, and is marred by some harsh and unmusical notes. Miss Carlotta Elliot struggled valiantly with her throat, and, true artist as she is, managed to charm under great difficulties, as did Madlle. Marie de Sido in the rôle of Marguerite which must suit her excellently when her voice is in full health. The concerted passages and the duel between herself and Mr. Power were received with great applause, and testified once again to the evergreen charm which Gounod's requisite music possesses for all.

The Glow-worms A. D. C. invited their friends to St. George's Hall on Saturday, December 11th, and thus secured a large and appreciative audience. The first item on the programme, "My Turn Next," was capitably acted by three of the performers. Mr. A. H. Beard, as Taraxicum Twitters, was very funny, without overdoing it. Mr. H. Weeden Cooke was a good Tim Bolus; but the greatest praise is due to Miss Knewstub, who, as the slavey Peggy, was simply perfect, and gave an exceedingly clever sketch. Every time I have had to review this young lady's acting, I have noticed an improvement on the previous performance. This is as it should be, but seldom is. Miss Douglas, Miss Garrett, Mr. C. Carr, and Mr. J. Grahame Slee make up the rest of the cast. "Broken Ties"—J. Palgrave Simpson's adaptation of "La Fiammina"—was rather a bold attempt for amateurs, the situations being so highly dramatic. Considering the difficulty, the interpretation, as a whole, was fairly good; in some cases very good. As La Silvia, Miss Cooke was earnest and painstaking, but over-weighted by a rôle requiring dramatic power of the highest order. Miss E. Hallett acted prettily as the *ingénue*, but was quite inaudible—unfortunately a frequent fault with amateurs; and Miss Douglas did fairly well as Mrs. Sherwood. Of Mr. H. Mills' Lord Castletowers, the least said the better. Mr. H. Weeden Cooke would have been a good Sir John Richmond had he not forgotten his words in the last act. Randal Richmond was capitably acted by Mr. P. Jefferis, who was natural and spirited; but Mr. A. H. Beard appeared out of his element as Herbert Warner. But for a slight want of memory at the end, Mr. J. M. Powell has seldom appeared to better advantage than as Lionel Warner; his make-up was good, and his acting full of dignity and pathos. An orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Leonard Gautier, whiled away the *entr'actes*, and all appeared delighted with their evening's amusement.

The Volunteer Medical Staff Corps being in want of new head-

quarters, determined to combine business with pleasure; and enlisting the kindly aid of the Lessee, who at once lent them his pretty little house, on Friday afternoon, December 17, 1886, produced at Toole's Theatre, Charles Dance's comic drama, "A Wonderful Woman," which carried me back to the days of Madame Vestris, Charles Matthews and Frank Matthews. Court dress is always a little trying to amateurs, it requires such a perfectly suave manner to accompany it that the *gaucherie* of those who are not in the constant habit of treading the boards becomes the more apparent, and the sword has a fatal tendency to entangle itself in the wearer's small clothes. Mr. Rorri Fletcher was gentlemanly, if not quite at ease, as the Marquis de Frontignac; and Mr. S. Smith rather burlesqued the character of the Court Chamberlain, the Viscount de Millefleurs. Mr. W. Halley, as Rodolphe, was dreadfully in earnest in the declaration of his passion to his first love, but cooled off when he was supposed to transfer it. Mr. J. Cantlie was most at home as Crepin, and made a very genial, amusing cobbler of him. Powder and patches suited Miss Gertrude Goetze, who looked and acted the proud Madame Hortense Bertrand with ease and finish, and Miss Blanche Wolseley made a very pleasing *ingénue* as Cecile. Mrs. Donald must not be forgotten as the Maid. Andrew Halliday's "Checkmate" fitted the volunteers much better. Mr. Grieves was natural and unaffected as Sir Everton Toffee, and Mr. Drury really full of humour as Sam Winkle, his Groom. Mr. Corbould did well as the Waiter. Miss Charlotte Russe, the lady who is checkmated, was so thoroughly a lady as Miss Adria Hill represented her, that she almost failed as the Maid, and Miss Lydia Rachel, though she a trifle overdid the part of Martha Bunn, was very amusing. Between the two pieces, Mr. J. L. Toole gave his sketch of "Trying a Magistrate," and produced the usual peals of laughter, and Mr. Anderson Critchett was encored for his singing of "The Midshipmite," in which the "gods" on this occasion joined with much fervour. Mr. A. E. Reade was equally successful in his rendering of "Light." I was glad to hear the pecuniary result was all that could be desired.

Nothing so gorgeous has been seen on the pantomime stage as "The Forty Thieves," as produced at Drury-Lane by the energetic and enterprising Augustus Harris. The dresses are simply marvels of richness in material and elegance in design. The scenery, of course, is excellent, and the company is a capital one. The comic element is admirably supported by Mr. Harry Nicholls and Mr. Herbert Campbell. Mr. Victor Stevens is also amusing in the introduced character of Ally Sloper. Miss Constance Gilchrist dances delightfully as Morgiana, and Miss Edith Bruce is a lively Ganem. Abdallah has a handsome representative in Miss Edith Blande Brereton, who acts with intelligence and carries herself most gracefully. Mr. Robert Pateman is too good an actor for so poor a part as Cassim. Miss Victor, Miss Marie Williams, and the Sisters Mario are good in other respects.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the Provinces, and Paris, from November 25 to December 24, 1886 :—

(Revivals are marked thus.)*

LONDON :

- Nov. 27 "Secrets of the Police," drama in four acts, by Mark Melford. Surrey Theatre.
- " 29 "Lord Marple's Daughter," comedy-drama in three acts, by Frank Harvey. Grand Theatre.
- Dec. 1 "Gladys," comedy in three acts, by Arthur Law. Strand Theatre.
- " 1 "I Dine with My Mother," comediotta, translated from the French, by C. McLachlan. Strand Theatre.
- " 2 "My Bonny Boy," farcical comedy, by T. G. Warren. Criterion Theatre (matinée, single performance).
- " 3 "A Brave Coward," play in three acts, by J. S. Blythe. Strand Theatre (matinée, single performance).
- " 6 "The Butler," domestic comedy in three acts, by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Merivale (originally produced at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, Nov. 25).
- " 9 "The Advocate," comedy-drama in four acts, adapted from the French, by Charles Lander. Town Hall, Kilburn.
- " 11 "Fatal Triumph," drama in four acts, by J. L. Featherstone and J. C. Hurd. New Cross Hall.
- " 15 "Bachelor's Wives," farce in three acts, by F. Bousfield. Strand Theatre (matinée, single performance).
- " 15 "The Friar," written by J. Comyn's Carr, music by Alfred Caldicott. St. George's Hall.
- " 16 "The Churchwarden," farce in three acts, translated from the German, by H. Cassel and C. Ogden. Olympic Theatre.
- " 18 "The Coming Clown," farce, by Mark Melford. Royalty Theatre.
- " 21* "Strafford," tragedy in five acts, by Robert Browning. Strand Theatre (matinée, single performance).
- " 22 "The Noble Vagabond," drama in four acts, by Henry Arthur Jones. Princess's Theatre.
- " 23 "Alice in Wonderland," fantastic play in two acts, adapted by H. Savile Clarke. Prince of Wales's Theatre (afternoon performance).
- " 23 "Monte Christo, Jr.," burlesque in three acts, by "Richard Henry." Gaiety Theatre.

PROVINCES :

- Nov. 25 "The Butler," domestic comedy in three acts, by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Merivale. Theatre Royal, Manchester.
- Dec. 3 "False Hearts," drama in four acts, by Allen Carter. Theatre Royal, West Bromwich.
- " 6 "Extreme Penalty," drama in four acts, by Gerald Holcroft. Theatre Royal, Doncaster.
- " 10 "Wanted, an Enemy," farce, by H. P. Grattan. Tyne Theatre, Newcastle.
- " 24 "A Woman's Truth," drama, by Walter Reynolds. Grand Theatre, Leeds.

PARIS :

- NOV. 22* "Les Mousquetaires au Convent," comic opera in three acts, by MM. Paul Ferrier and Jules Prével, music by M. Louis Varney. Folies Dramatiques.
- " 27 "La Belle Italie," comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Jules Prével and Alfred Erny. Cluny.
- Dec. 1 "En Revenant de la Revue," *revue* in two tableaux, by M. Louisle
- " Bourg. Alcazar.
- " 2 "Gotte," comedy in four acts, by M. Henri Meilhac. Palais Royal.
- " 4 "Augereau ou les Volontaires de la République," drama in five acts and ten tableaux, by M. Gaston Marot. Château d'Eau.
- " "Paris sur Scène," *revue* in five acts and nine tableaux, by MM. Dahl and Merville. Beaumarchais.
- " 6 "Egmont," lyric drama in four acts, libretto by MM. Albert Wolff and Albert Millaud, music by M. Gaston Salvayre. Opéra Comique.
- " 7 "La Princesse Colombine" (adapted from "Nell Gwynne"), comic opera in three acts, by MM. Maurice Ordonneau and Emile André, music by M. Robert Planquette. Nouveautés.
- " 10 "La Bourse et la Vie," comedy, in one act, in verse, by M François Mons. Odéon.
- " 11 "Volapuk Revue," *revue* in three acts and nine tableaux, by MM. William Busnach and Albert Vanloo. Menus Plaisirs.
- " 15* "Michel Pauper," drama in five acts, by M. Henri Becque. Odéon.
- " 17 "Tailleur pour Dames," vaudeville in three acts, by M. Georges Feydeau. Renaissance.
- " "Revue Incohérente," *revue* in three acts and a prologue, by MM. Louis Battaille and Julien Sermet. Scala.
- " 18 "Cinq Doigts de Birouk," drama in five acts and seven tableaux, adapted for the stage by M. Pierre Decourcelle from the novel by M. Louis Ulbach. Théâtre de Paris.
- " 20 "Patrie," opera in five acts and six tableaux, adapted for the operatic stage from the drama of the same name by MM. Victorien Sardou and Louis Gallet, music by M. Emile Paladilhe. Opera.



The Warriors of the Sea.

A LIFE-BOAT STORY.

(From *Punch*.)

UP goes the Lytham signal ! St. Anne's has summoned hands !
Knee-deep in surf the Life-Boat's launched abreast of
Southport sands !

Half deafened by the screaming wind : half blinded by the rain,
Three crews await their Coxswains, and face the hurricane !
The stakes are death or duty ! No man has answered " No !"
Lives must be saved out yonder on the doomed ship *Mexico* !
Did ever night look blacker ? Did sea so hiss before ?
Did ever women's voices wail more piteous on the shore ?
Out from three ports of Lancashire that night went Life-boats
three,
To fight a splendid battle, manned by Warriors of the Sea !

Along the sands of Southport brave women held their breath,
For they knew that those who loved them where fighting hard
with death,

A cheer went out from Lytham ! the tempest tost it back,
As the gallant lads of Lancashire bent to the waves' attack ;
And girls who dwell about St. Anne's, with faces white with fright,
Pray'd God would still the tempest that dark December night.
Sons, husbands, lovers, brothers, they'd given up their all,
These noble English women, heart-sick at duty's call ;
But not a cheer, or tear, or prayer, from those who bent the knee,
Came out across the waves to nerve those Warriors of the Sea !

Three boats went out from Lancashire, but one came back to tell,
The story of that hurricane, the tale of ocean's hell !
All safely reached the *Mexico*, their trysting-place to keep,
For one there was the rescue, the others in the deep
Fell in the arms of victory ! dropped to their lonely grave,
Their passing bell the tempest, their requiem the wave !
They clung to life like sailors, they fell to death like men,
Where, in our roll of heroes ? When in our story ? When ?
Have Englishmen been braver, or fought more loyally,
With death that comes by duty to the Warriors of the Sea

One boat came back to Lytham ! its noble duty done,
But at St. Anne's and Southport the Prize of Death was won !
Won by those gallant fellows, who went men's lives to save,
And died there crown'd with glory ! enthroned upon the wave !
Within a rope's throw of the wreck, the English sailors fell,
A blessing on their faithful lips, when ocean rang their knell ;
Weep not for them, dear women ! cease wringing of your hands ;
Go out to meet your heroes across the Southport sands !
Grim Death for them is stingless ! The Grave has victory !
Cross oars and bear them nobly home ! Brave Warriors of the
Sea !

When in dark nights of Winter, fierce storms of wind and rain,
Howl round the cosy homestead and lash the window-pane,
When over hill and tree-top we hear the tempests roar,
And hurricanes go sweeping on from valley to the shore,
When nature seems to stand at bay, and silent terror comes,
And those we love on earth the best are gathered in our homes !
Think of the sailors round the coast, who braving sleet or snow,
Leave sweethearts, wives, and little ones, when duty bids them go !
Think of our sea-girt island ! a harbour, where alone,
No Englishman to save a life has failed to risk his own !
Then when the storm howls loudest, pray of your charity,
That God will bless the Life-boat ! and the Warriors of the Sea !
C. S.





" Oh, do not think me bold and unmaidenly ! "

SOPHIA.

MISS KATE RORKE IN " SOPHIA. "

THE THEATRE.



Shakspeare's Two Characters of Antony and Cleopatra.

BY H. SCHÜTZ WILSON.

THE "tragedie of Anthony and Cleopatra" was printed for the first time in the folio of 1623. This folio was "set forth" by Shakspeare's "friends and fellows," John Heminge and Henry Condell, Shakspeare, to the world's lasting regret and loss, not having had "the fate common with some to be exequator to his own writings." We have, unfortunately, no play of Shakspeare which was ever subjected to his own revision and editorship. The life of Antonius, in North's translation (from the French) of "Plutarch's Lives" has served Shakspeare for a basis of historical fact; but his art treatment of the theme and the creation of the characters are all his own.

Coleridge says, "Of all Shakspeare's historical plays 'Antony and Cleopatra' is by far the most wonderful. The highest praise, or, rather, form of praise, of this play which I can offer in my own mind is the doubt which the perusal always occasions in me, whether the 'Antony and Cleopatra' is not, in all exhibitions of a giant power in its strength and vigour of maturity, a formidable rival of 'Macbeth,' 'Lear,' 'Hamlet,' and 'Othello.'"

Coleridge thus ranks this drama, which is historical, on a level with those four greatest plays of Shakspeare, which are not merely historical, but are abstract conceptions, unlimited by any necessary adherence to a sub-structure of known and recognised historical fact.

The great drama opens in a room in Cleopatra's palace at Alexandria. Outside is the unchanging calm sunshine of the glowing land of Egypt, and the deep blue of its burning skies is

reflected in the sleepily shining waters. Inside all is cool and shadowy. Huge columns soften into shade the burning sunlight and the dazzling glare; the hot air scarcely stirs among the massive shafts or through the thickly clustering pillars; but yet the fierce sun, dimly seen as through a veil, is not unfelt in the sumptuous space of that splendid palace, which is the gorgeous home of enervating luxury, of wanton delight, and of regal dissoluteness. Rome, Greece, and Egypt meet and mingle in Cleopatra's Alexandrian halls; without which the branding sunshine burns for ever in its golden glow, while within the royal pile opens that play of Shakspeare which depicts, immortally, the loves, and fates, and characters, and deaths of Antony and of Cleopatra. The keynote is struck by Demetrius, one of the friends to Antony, who laments the dotage of the soft triumvir, and tells us that, if we take but good note, we shall see in him—

The triple pillar of the world transform'd
Into a strumpet's fool.

Behold and judge! After the few opening words of Demetrius, we hear a flourish, and then enter Antony, Cleopatra, her ladies, the train, and eunuchs fanning her.

Then ensues, between the royal lovers, some dalliance of love-talk, which is interrupted by that which grates upon the love-dream of besotted Antony—a messenger from Rome. Cleopatra chastises the lethargy of the Antony, that will not waken, with the shrill satire and sarcasm of her bitter, malicious, yet politic-tongue. Her leading motive is jealousy of Fulvia, but her scornful, yet cunning, malice knows how to sting the jealousy of Antony against “the scarce-bearded Cæsar.” He will not hear the ambassador. Embracing his fair queen, the enslaved hero cries—

The nobleness of life

Is to do thus.

Cleopatra replies, with subtle irony—

Excellent falsehood!

Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?

I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony

Will be himself.

The inert Antony answers—

Fie, wrangling queen!

Whom everything becomes, to chide, to laugh,

To weep; whose every passion fully strives

To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!

No messenger but thine—

Her wit is as mighty as her charm, and victorious Cleopatra leads away her Antony to revel in fresh pleasure, the ambassadors remaining unheard. We see that—

Sometimes, when he is not Antony,
He comes too short of that great property,
Which still should go with Antony.

Such is the first glimpse, and the first hearing, that we get of the splendid lovers; and how much we have already seen, and seen into, of the characters and positions of the twain!

The characters are fully indicated; the undercurrents of feeling are clearly suggested, and we feel the pressure of the summons which should awaken Antony from his lethargy of debasing delight, and recall him to war, to duty, to empire, and to Rome. Antony's chains are heavy and are strong; but they are not quite firmly locked, and he can yet slip them off when his better nature wakes. Cleopatra says—

He was disposed to mirth; but on a sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him.

She is too wary to see him when he shall have heard the messengers from Rome. They bring the news of the death of Fulvia, and of the business in the State, which is as a trumpet to call the warrior triumvir to action and to war.

There's a great spirit gone!

says Antony of Fulvia. His roused nature feels that—

I must from this enchanting queen break off.

* * * * *

She is cunning past man's thought.

* * * * *

Would I had never seen her.

The Roman politician and captain are fully stirred in Antony who determines to begone. The "enchanting queen" feels how serious his purpose is, and she has, perhaps, heard from spies that he has bidden Enobarbus to

Name Cleopatra as she is called in Rome;
and has added,

These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage.

The next scene is one of the supreme efforts of creative dramatic treatment of a character. The practised coquette, accustomed to deal with the passions of lovers, to sway the ebb and flow of desire and of discontent—the born actress who, in her infinite

variety, can excite and assuage, can simulate moods and tempers, in order to subjugate, and to inflame—exerts all the powers of artful enchantment to pique, to subdue, to hold the lover who, if he cannot touch her love, can yet excite her desire and stir her admiration. She does not wish that Antony should leave Egypt, and escape her soft toils; but yet she dreads the Roman thought which seems to revive the nobler instincts of one who, on the downward path of ruin, has glimpses of the hero in him yet. Antony has resolved to go, and yet finds it hard to leave the enchanting queen.

See where he is, who's with him, what he does:
I did not send you: if you find him sad,
Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report
That I am sudden sick: quick, and return.

Charmian, a well-practised *soubrette*, used to love intrigues, has only cunning, while Cleopatra has intellect. The waiting-woman says—

Madam, methinks if you did love him dearly,
You do not hold the method to enforce
The like from him.

CLEO. What should I do, I do not?

CHAR. In each thing give him way, cross him in nothing.

CLEO. Thou teachest like a fool: the way to lose him.

Antony, from whom woman has seldom heard the word “no,” entering, to take half-unwilling leave, his sense of right contending with his baser weakness, finds her “sick and sullen,” ready to play off upon his struggling purposes all the battery of her artful, fascinating caprice. She seems angry, indignant, patient, defiant, pathetic—all by turns; but even she cannot, for all her policy, refrain from acrid allusions to “the married woman,” Fulvia.

O most false love!
Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be.

She can even pretend to be better than the thing she is. There is a show of pathos in the beautiful lines:

Courteous lord, one word.
Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it:
Sir, you and I have loved, but that's not it:
That you know well: something it is I would—
O, my oblivion is a very Antony,
And I am all forgotten.

Her scorn and bitterness anger Antony and harden him in his purpose. He feels that she cannot sympathise with his hero's duty; and, after a scene of most varied emotion and most subtle art, Antony, though feeling in courteous weakness that

Our separation so abides and flies,
That thou residing here go'st yet with me,
And I hence fleeting here remain with thee.

Something in her conduct has jarred upon her lover's better nature, and he realises the fine difference suggested by Brutus' Portia, and feels that Cleopatra is Antony's harlot, not his wife.

And so Antony has, for a time, ceased to waste

The lamps of night in revel ;

has ceased "to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy;" and has gone, at the call of war, to meet his "great competitor" Cæsar. Meanwhile his "serpent of old Nile" gives way to a fine frenzy of love-longing in absence, and would seek from Mandragora the power to

Sleep out this great gap of time
My Antony is away.

* * * *

O Charmian,
Where think'st thou he is now? stands he or sits he?
Or does he walk? or is he on his horse?
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!

Alexis brings news from Antony, and increases the Queen's love-sickness. Her wanton's memory prizes Antony by comparing him with other former lovers, with Julius Cæsar and with Pompey:

Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Cæsar so?

CHAR. O that brave Cæsar!

CLEO. Be choked with such another emphasis!
Say, the brave Antony.

CHAR. The valiant Cæsar!

CLEO. By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth,
If you with Cæsar paragon again
My man of men.

The favourite waiting-woman, excusing herself adroitly, is, happily, not made a patient for the dentist; and Cleopatra, con-

temning those salad days, when she was green in judgment, sends to her lover twenty several messengers :

He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt.

And so ends the first act. We have seen, and have learned intimately to know, the Græco-Egyptian Queen and the great Roman triumvir. We hear their voices and we see their forms. We see the inner action of the soul which inspires speech and impels conduct. They live and move and have their being before our spiritual as our bodily eyes. We realise the handsome, gallant, courteous Roman ; and we come under the spell of the fair woman who unites with such voluptuous beauty such deadly charm. Shakspeare has also drawn his Antony in "Julius Cæsar;" has developed the orator, reveller, soldier, who avenged Cæsar and who conquered at Philippi. The Antony of "Julius Cæsar" was in ripening for the sway of Cleopatra under Octavius Cæsar.

In Act II. Pompey says, hoping that Egypt's widow will keep Antony from the field,—

But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned life!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!

And, in Cleopatra, witchcraft does join with beauty, so that, great as her beauty is, her magic transcends it. Pompey's father had felt her irresistible potency of demonic charm. In the more nervous air of Rome, and away from the fatal sorceress, Antony can admit that there had been a time in Egypt

When poisoned hours had bound me up
From mine own knowledge.

Then comes the proposal of Agrippa that Antony shall marry Octavia, the half-sister of Octavius, and so become brother to Cæsar. This marriage was the last chance of Antony for safety and for honour ; but he was so enfeathered to Cleopatra's love that the happily-promising union became a source of danger. The pitying gods were giving the licentious, but not wholly depraved, Antony a great, last opportunity of returning to virtue, power, and success. On the one side a life of honourable energy and glory with Octavia ; on the other he may return to the spells of Cleopatra, and become

The noble ruin of her magic.

Even in his degradation and in his ruin Antony retains a touch of nobleness. The art of Shakspeare was too fine to draw such a hero and to paint so sad a fate without leaving the splendid Antony a subject of pathos; while for Cleopatra we feel no pity. Even her charm—which we deeply feel—cannot wholly gild her baseness.

To heighten, to inflame, to allure the senses and imagination of a lover was one of the arts of which Cleopatra was mistress, and Antony was a man to be subjugated through the imagination as well as swayed by the senses. Who can wonder that a hero of his temperament was captivated by the regal actress when first her barge, like a burnish'd throne, burn'd on the water of the river of Cydnus? What pomp of art, what glory of effect, the magic enchantress showed in that sumptuous triumph!—a triumph which was worth the noble line of Shakspeare's immortal, most poetical description. And the charmed Antony, under demoniacal possession, soon found that—

Other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
When most she satisfies: for vilest things
Become themselves in her.

He forgot her past and his own future, and sank to be the slave of Circean enchantment and of never cloyed passion. He becomes delightedly subject to her “infinite variety.”

That time—O times!—
I laugh'd him out of patience, and that night
I laughed him into patience.

Antony had the excuse of having fallen into the toils of one of the rare witch-women of the world.

In vain does the soothsayer warn that Cæsar's fortunes shall rise higher than those of Antony, and bid him—

Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side;

but the other injunction, “Hie you to Egypt again,” does not sleep in the ear which is quickened by a heart which, despite the fact that “Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation,” will to its “Egyptian dish again.”

I will to Egypt;
And though I make this marriage for my peace,
I' the east my pleasure lies.

And Antony, in the early time of his marriage, is ready to sacrifice honour and duty to the pleasure that he finds with Cleopatra.

The dangerous and degrading bond which linked Antony to Cleopatra was too strong for his weakness. The marriage of policy with the noble, but cold Octavia, was an attempt to escape; but as his marriage was a treason to his love so his return to the siren was a disloyalty to his wife.

The news of the marriage reaches Cleopatra. She is an actress chiefly with Antony, and her furious rage at the strange news is very real and genuine. It was no pleasant duty to be the messenger who bore such tidings to the imperial and cruel despot. Very subtly feminine and full of woman's wit are her inquiries about the age, the stature, the features, the character of the second wife of Antony. She finds comfort in the messenger's description, and feels that "all may be well enough." She reckons securely upon the return of the doting lover to her bondage.

Shakspeare does not show us the first meeting of the lovers when Antony returns to Cleopatra. We hear of it from Cæsar, who is naturally indignant at the wrong done to Octavia and at the dishonour done to himself :

I' the market-place, on a tribunal silver'd,
 Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
 Were publicly enthroned : at the feet sat
 Cæsarion, whom they call my father's son,
 And all the unlawful issue that their lust
 Since then hath made between them. Unto her
 He gave the 'stablishment of Egypt.

* * * *

His sons he there proclaim'd the kings of kings :
 Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia,
 He gave to Alexander ; to Ptolemy he assigned
 Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia : she
 In the habiliments of the goddess Isis
 That day appear'd.

Lepidus had been deposed by Cæsar, and the two left of the three world-sharers are now at fierce war. For Cleopatra's sake the infatuated Antony has made a deadly enemy of the dangerous Cæsar ; and the prophecy of the soothsayer is about to be fulfilled.

Cæsar is swift, Antony dilatory in action.

Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent ;

and Antony pays the tribute of wonder to Cæsar's swift and soldierly energy. For himself, every step shall henceforward be a fault. His licentious life has enfeebled his brain. He will fight at sea, against the advice of his captains, for no better reason than—

For that he dares us to 't.

Cleopatra, against the remonstrances of Enobarbus, will herself be present at the sea-fight ; and the wilful Queen brings Antony to ruin and defeat. When did Cleopatra ever allow wisdom to over-ride caprice ?

The day of shame comes, and, at the fatal fight at Actium, treacherous Cleopatra, when the chances of war leaned rather to their side,—

Hoists sails and flies ;

and the fated Antony

Claps on his sea-wing, and like a doting mallard,
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her :
I never saw an action of such shame ;
Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.

The doomed lovers had

Kissed away
Kingdoms and provinces.

* * * *

Had our general
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well :
O, he has given example for our flight
Most grossly by his own !

The disgraced Antony finds—

I am so lated in the world that I
Have lost my way for ever.

He is "unqualified with my shame ;" and there is a deep pathos in the hero's sad admission :

I have offended reputation,
A most unnoble swerving.

His reproaches to Cleopatra are sad rather than bitter :

Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,
And thou should'st tow me after ; o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

He sees himself compelled to send "humble treaties" to the young man ; to "dodge and palter in the shifts of lowness ;" but the vanquished warrior and degraded prince is still besotted by his affection, and cries—

Give me a kiss ;

Even this repays me.

The conquering Cæsar desires that the Queen shall

From Egypt drive her all-disgraced friend,
Or take his life there.

He wishes to win Cleopatra from Antony. The desperate Antony cries to Cæsar :

I dare him therefore

To lay his gay comparisons apart
And answer me declined, sword against sword,
Ourselves alone.

(To be concluded in our next issue.)



The Manager's Benefit.

A MEMORABLE NIGHT.

BY E. J. GOODMAN.

WE were playing a three months' engagement, at Bellchester, out in the West :
It's a town with a famous cathedral ; but a sleepy old place at the best ;
For except on the day of the market, or during the annual fair,
Or the week when they hold the assizes, there isn't much doing down there.
True, the church folk encouraged the drama, at least in a mild sort of way ;
But the people who went to the chapels of course didn't go to the play.
And as for the rest, with our talent, 'twas just throwing pearls before swine—
Penny readings, the circus, and concerts were very much more in their line.
So whatever the piece we presented, and no matter how well we might act,
In the flourish about "crowded houses," there was often more fiction than fact.
For although it was frequently stated that there wasn't a seat to be had,
Yet, between you and me, for the most part, the business was wickedly bad.
'Twas a case of half salaries sometimes, and at last the receipts got so small
That the period arrived when the "phantom" wasn't able to "ramble" at all.
Yet for all that we stuck to the gov'nor—we knew that his money was good—
Though he might be "behind" for the moment, he always paid up when he could.
And we loved the old boy like a father, for there wasn't a kindlier man
In the whole of the blessed profession than worthy old manager Dan ;
With his noble white head and tall figure, and broad beaming face, shaven clean,
And his tales of the days when he acted at "the Lane" with Macready and Kean.

Well, at last matters came to a crisis, and the treasury funds sank so low
 That the manager called us together, and said he must shut up the show.
 "I am grieved at the parting, believe me," he exclaimed, with a tear in his eye;
 "But 'there's no way but this,' as the Bard says, so God bless you, dear friends, and good bye."
 There were just a few moments of silence, for no one knew quite what to say,
 Though 'twas clear that we all felt unwilling to leave the old man in this way.
 So when some one at last put the question: "Well, what's it to be? Shall we go?"
 We replied, like a chorus of supers, with a loud and unanimous "No!"
 And we all crowded round the old fellow, and the men took a grip of his hand,
 While the ladies impulsively kissed him, till he seemed altogether unmanned.
 Then we said, if a week or two longer he only would keep up the fight,
 We'd go shares in the profits—if any—and give him a benefit night.
 He agreed to accept our proposal, but declared, if the benefit stood
 In his name as a "draw" for the public, it must be for the general good.
 So we settled affairs on that basis; then played "on the share" for a week,
 And prepared an attractive performance for the night of the coming "bespeak."

Now it chanced that a great Prima Donna, renowned for her talents and wealth,
 Was residing just then in our district, to rest, and recover her health.
 There she lived in the strictest seclusion—was hardly, indeed, to be seen,
 Though the people all longed for a sight of the beautiful Opera Queen,
 As they see her in London and Paris, arrayed, on the nights when she sings,
 In her splendid and wonderful dresses, and diamonds given by Kings.
 "If we only could get her to help us," the manager said, with a sigh,
 "'Twould be almost as good as a fortune—but, there, it is hopeless to try."
 Yet, for all that he wrote to the Diva, describing our sorrowful plight,

And he asked her to grace with her presence his forthcoming benefit night.

Her reply came next day at rehearsal—of course we expected a “No”;

But the gov'nor exclaimed, “Why, God bless her, she says she *will come* to the show!”

And she came, with her diamonds sparkling, and wearing her handsomest gown;

And the news of her coming attracted the wealthiest folks in the town,

As well as the great county gentry, from manors, and mansions, and halls,

Who took every seat in the boxes, and filled the “additional” stalls;

While the “popular parts” were so crowded that you couldn't find room for a mouse

In the pit or the gallery either: we never had half such a house.

And the rush even then wasn't over, for the people kept flocking in scores,

Till the box-keepers had to stop “taking,” and turn money away from the doors.

We were playing a popular drama, which in London had had a long run;

It contained many strong situations, and plenty of pathos and fun.

The performance at first dragged a little; for the eyes of the audience were bent

On the famous and beautiful lady; but it soon woke them up, and it “*went*.”

Yes, we *did* make it go, I can tell you, without any hitches or flaws,

Exciting now tears and now laughter, and round upon round of applause.

And the people were all so delighted—pit, gallery, boxes, and stalls—

That at every fall of the curtain there was simply no end to the calls.

And we all felt immensely elated, as of course you may easily guess,

For the whole of the night's entertainment had proved a triumphant success.

There was just “half a length” with some business, to close the last scene of the play,

When a workman rushed on to the stage with a terrible look of dismay.

He had slipped on a property mantle to cover his working attire; And he whispered the gov'nor, “Ring down, sir; the gallery floor is on fire!”

For some lout in the “gods,” who was smoking, had let fall a spark down below

Through the boards on the sawdust and rubbish, which it set in a
smouldering glow.
But the audience had not yet perceived it, and our people in front
did not dare
To attempt to prevent it from spreading, for fear of exciting a
scare.
And we on the stage knew the danger, yet all remained cool and
serene,
Playing on as though nothing had happened, right through to the
end of the scene.
But with hearts chilled and throbbing with terror, and filled with
an eager desire
To hasten the end ere the people could know of their peril from
fire.
Oh! the horror and dread of those moments, as in fancy there rose
to my ears—
In the midst of the clap-trap and nonsense; the boisterous laughter
and cheers—
All the sounds of the possible Panic—the shouts and the screams
of affright,
And the groans of the maimed and the dying, struck down in the
desperate fight
To escape from the fiery demon, as its stifling and sulphurous
breath
Grew nearer and denser and hotter in that temple of pleasure and
death!
But the end came at last, and the signal was rung for the curtain
to fall;
And it fell, between us and the audience, and hid them from sight
like a pall.
Yet they ceased not their cheers and their clappings: Oh, God!
would they never have done?
And they made us appear all together, then called us by name, one
by one,
Though we sought by our gestures and glances, as much as we
dared, to beseech
That they'd spare us this empty ovation; yet still there were cries
for "a speech."
So the manager stepped swiftly forward, and, bowing to left and to
right,
Placed his hand on his heart, and said simply, "Thank you *all*,
my kind friends, and good night."
It was brief, but enough to content them: once more they
applauded and cheered;
Then they rose from their seats and departed, and soon the whole
building was cleared.
And 'twas time; for the last of the audience had hardly been seen
to retire,
When there crept through the house a faint odour—the first
deadly symptom of fire.
Then we rushed up the gallery staircase with blankets and buckets
and pails,

And like madmen we dragged up the benches, and tore up the
boards with our nails ;
And we deluged the fierce burning masses with water in stream
upon stream,
Till we stood nearly stifled and blinded with volumes of smoke
and hot steam.
But we fought with the fiery danger a stubborn and desperate
fight,
Till we conquered our foe in the struggle, and quenched it and
quelled it outright.

'Twas the talk of the city next morning, how nobly we all had
behaved,
And how, thanks to our coolness and courage, some hundreds of
lives had been saved.
Then the great Prima Donna presented a beautiful diamond ring
To the gov'nor, and made him an offer to come down one evening
and sing ;
Which she did ; and her promised appearance drew crowds to the
playhouse once more,
And at double the usual prices we took twice as much as before.
And all through the season the bus'ness grew better and better
each day ;
While even some pious Dissenters came down now and then to
the play,
For their preacher had said in a sermon that men who obeyed
duty's call,
Like those worldly and frivolous actors, could not be so bad after
all.

So we played out our three months' engagement ; and opened
again the next year ;
And indeed, in old Bellchester city, whenever we choose to appear,
We are never in want of an audience, for the people recall with
delight
How we saved them from death and disaster on the Manager's
Benefit Night.



The Drury Lane Managers.

FROM KILLIGREW TO AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

PART II.

KILLIGREW AND DAVENANT.

IT is on the return of Charles II. to his kingdom that the first Drury Lane manager makes his entry on the scene, viz., the well-known "Tom" Killigrew, a member of a very remarkable family, noted for their taste for the drama. There were three brothers—"Tom," William, and Henry—sons of Sir Robert Killigrew, two of whom were about the Court. "Tom" is a distinct figure, one of those humorous persons that Princes love to have next them to make them laugh. He had attended his master in exile, and had been brought up from childhood in the Court, where he had been page to King Charles I. He contrived, however, to be sent on a serious mission to Venice, where his proceedings only brought scandal and discredit on his Court, and he was finally requested to withdraw, owing to his "vicious behaviour," of which formal complaint was made.

When the Royal exile returned, it was recorded that the *ennui* of the voyage was relieved by the quips and jests of the facetious "Tom," who was seen on the deck convulsing all with his sallies. He was then about fifty years old, and his portrait—a characteristic one—reveals him as a stout, rubicund personage, double-chinned, full-cheeked, with moustache and tuft suggesting very much one of the full-blooded Dutch burghers; the eye moist and twinkling, and the whole suggestive of a comfortable sensuality. With the restored King he became such a favourite that he obtained all kinds of offices, privileges, and perquisites, whereof the list is really astonishing from the number of "good things" enjoyed by this jovial pluralist. He was married to Mrs. Cecilia Crofts, a lady with a fortune of £10,000. Through all the revelling days that followed, his figure stands out with marked distinctness.



"Oh, I remember, Mr. David Garrick, will you do me the honour to accept my daughter's hand?"

MR. DAVID JAMES IN "DAVID GARRICK."

"I am told," says Pepys in a significant passage, "that Tom Killigrew hath a fee out of the wardrobe for Cap and Bells, under the title of 'King's Fool and Jester,' and may revile or jeer anybody, the greatest person, without offence, by reason of his place." On the other hand, he had a true taste for the stage and for the poetical drama, which he cultivated even under the depressing influences of exile, for when abroad he wrote most, if not all, his plays; indeed, under his *debonnaire* rollicking humour there was a certain shrewd sense displayed. He had a wary eye for "the main chance," as it is called. Bishop Sprat described him as one of the most agreeable persons of the Court. In short, he displayed many of the important gifts of managership.

Almost on the arrival of the King this ardent follower of the stage felt that the drama must be at once set on a proper footing and encouraged in every possible way, and he and his brother courtier, Davenant, lost not a moment in obtaining a special privilege from the King, not only to open theatres, but to *close* any that ventured to compete with them. The peculiar position of the theatre in those times has often been explained, and, it may be said, this relationship of two gentlemen of the Court shows clearly the meaning of the oft-debated control by the Chamberlain and the autocratic direction of the Court. We can readily understand this by conceiving of some fashionable pastime such as the "open-air plays" or the "New Club," being "taken up" by the Heir-Apparent, and entrusted to the direction and general management of one or two of his gentlemen, who would take care to see that it was duly select, and only open to the "Prince's set." The restrictions and despotic control might be illustrated by a lower and more unflattering comparison, viz., by the strict supervision and control of houses of entertainment, such as public houses. Future generations may yet wonder at the restrictions submitted to in a "land of liberty."

No ancient document has ever been more vehemently discussed and assailed during a period of two centuries than the two famous Patents of 1662—one to Davenant, of January 15; the other to Tom Killigrew, of April 25—extensions, as they were of former warrants.* The pair, having secured the monopoly, proceeded in a shrewd spirit of business to make as much profit as they could. Besides administering their own ventures, they

* They are given in full in the writer's "History of the Stage," I., 73.

"farmed out" a portion of their rights to other companies, much as nowadays the proprietor of a popular piece will, for a consideration, allow some travelling party to "take it into the country." For one of their new ventures they actually contracted to receive £3 10s. for every acting night. In their turn, however, they had to pay black mail to the Master of the Revels, who would arbitrarily close their theatre if attention were not paid to his wishes.

Each manager now built a new and handsome theatre, Killigrew deserting his mean house in Clare Market and coming to Drury Lane; Davenant, at Dorset Gardens. This latter was a handsome and elegant building, standing by the river side; exact pictures of it have been preserved, and it displays the best and most piquant form of Jacobean architecture. Mr. Killigrew also, obtaining a piece of ground from the Earl of Bedford, in Drury Lane, proceeded to erect his new theatre, joining with him another gentleman with theatrical tastes—Sir Robert Howard. A sort of joint stock company was formed on sharing principles, comprised of the managers and actors. Mr. Pepys saw the house when it was in process of erection, and thought it would be "very fine." The opening night was April 8, 1663. The bill ran:—

By His Majesty's Company of Comedians.
At the New Theatre in Drury Lane.
This Day, being Thursday, April 8, 1663, will be acted
A Comedy, called
THE HUMOROUS LIEUTENANT.
The King, Mr. WINTERSHAL.
Demetrius, Mr. HART.
Selevers, Mr. BURT.
Leonline, NIGER MOHUN.
Lieutenant, Mr. CLUN.
Celia, Mrs. MARSHALL.
The play will begin at three o'clock exactly.
Boxes, 4s.; Pit, 2s. 6d.; Middle Gallery, 1s. 6d.;
Upper Gallery, 1s.

Every one who has been connected with the stage can furnish testimony to the crop of troubles and annoyances in which it, beyond all other professions, is fruitful, no doubt owing to the competition for the favour of the audience. This favour is, in a great degree, a fixed quantity, and what is gained by one is lost to another. A new star either displaces the old star or makes him share his honour; hence this public favour is a vital matter, and this may be at the bottom of all the little jealousies and

intrigues with which players are credited. Even at this early period Mr. Killigrew was to find himself harassed by all the troubles and anxieties of the most modern of our managers. His actors would desert in spite of solemn articles, or go into revolt. In 1673 he obtained further authority by being appointed Master of the Revels, so that he could now control himself, or summon himself to his own offices, very much as in the pleasant "Mikado," the high functionary and pluralist, Koko, can appeal in his own case from one of the offices held by him to another. The usual disaster, however, to which theatrical property is incident had befallen him in the conflagration of his theatre in January, 1672. A new house was contracted for, and Wren, the famous architect, was called in to furnish a plan. It was completed on a much more ambitious scale than the old one, costing £2,300. This house endured for over a hundred years, saw the dramatic triumphs of Garrick and Sheridan, and not many years ago there might have been a stray person alive who might have attended a performance there. When it was opened it did not flourish; the rivalry of the other theatre was too much. A decay of theatrical taste set in. Killigrew, who had seen such stirring times, and passed through the most exciting alternations of management, had now become old and lost energy; he was sunk in embarrassments. His death occurred on March 19, 1681, and it was found that this old *viveur* had not only left no "assets," but had mortgaged or disposed of everything he could get at. His wife's fortune, which was strictly settled, it was found he had made away during his sickness by some legal contrivance. He had entered into certain contracts with his son, which he did not carry out, and the latter had to go to law to compel him to do so. "Madam" Killigrew was left quite destitute, and she had piteously to appeal to His Majesty for relief.

Such was the result of a courtier's venture. But henceforth management was to fall into more business and practical hands. The next most important administrator was Christopher Rich, who, with his son John, held office for some sixty or seventy years between them, and passed through much trouble and contention. To Christopher, Alexander Davenant sold his patent in 1688. This person was a singular character enough: noted chiefly for his litigious and ill-conditioned nature.

His fellow manager, Sir W. Davenant, is a very hackneyed

theme, and of late years has been brought before the public until one has grown tired of Davenant and the Duke's Theatre. He was of a more robust and manly type than his fellow patentee. He, too, had been a page, had fought in the civil war, and for his prowess had been knighted by King Charles. Born in 1605, the son of an innkeeper and vintner, it was an oft-repeated legend that he was the illegitimate son of the "Divine William," and it is added that he used to disclaim the insinuation with a meaning smile, as though it were not distasteful to him. In 1628, being cast upon the world, owing to the death of his patron, he began to write masques and pieces of occasion for the Court, very much as certain literary marquises used to do for the entertainments of the imperial circle at Compiègne. In the wars he was arrested, and was released, and generally tolerated by the Cromwellians. He was even allowed, in 1656, to open a sort of theatre in Charterhouse Yard, where he brought out an opera called "The Siege of Rhodes," set off with what was quite a novelty—side scenes and appointments. On the return of the King, he was in high favour, and with his friend enjoyed the patent and sole monopoly. He built a handsome theatre in Dorset Gardens, on the edge of the Thames, close to where the Guildhall School of Music now stands, and the pictures suggest something Dutchlike and pleasing in the elevation with its arches and campanile. Here he seems to have astonished the public by the magnificence of his scenic efforts; indeed, he is justly considered the father of scenery. This art he had studied abroad, where the pomp and luxury of the decoration had long been familiar in, and these Davenant introduced to London. There is one scarce Italian book on scenery—by Giglione, I think—whose illustrations prove that they were but little inferior as regards the painting to the attempts of our day. The lighting was, of course, deficient, but painting does not gain by the floods of light now shed upon it. It is natural, after all, when we think that the great painters were then covering great areas of canvas with pictures in oil, painted with a broad, effective brush, that the same power and effects could be applied to the stage. Pepys was greatly struck with his "Reign of Rhodes," which he pronounced to be "very fine and magnificent." Even when he was at the Cockpit in the Cromwellian days he produced some remarkable effects by the announced "art of perspective in scenes." Thus a

landscape was discovered, "showing the bare tops of distant hills, sands shining on the shore of rivers." In front was a wood, through which a distant prospect was seen; monkeys were on the trees, and palms and cocoa trees rose in front. This was a complete "set," the trees in front being evidently cut out in "profile." But there is a rare play, "The Emperor of Morocco," each act of which is set off by an illustration of the scene. These, without exaggeration, are as effective as any modern scene offered by our own great *impresario*. Even a view of the proscenium is given, a singularly rich and imposing façade, not unlike a finely carved Italian picture frame. In these illustrations the side scenes are readily distinguishable.

Davenant was much troubled in keeping his troupe in order, one Harris particularly, who was overset by vanity and applause, giving special annoyance. Our manager is shown, at the beginning of his collected works, an ugly fellow, certainly, with an unmistakably damaged or crushed nose, which it was creditable to both painter and sitter to allow of being portrayed. His works are respectable in quantity and quality—a portly folio. And this suggests yet another note of the typical English "manager": he is nearly always a dramatist. In fact, "managing" involves the drama. Cibber, Garrick, the two Colmans, Kemble, Dibdin, Bunn, and many more were all successful dramatists. But Davenant attracts our eye as being the first in the long line of scenic managers. He had but a short reign, dying in 1668. Pepys went to see him buried; but noted the number of hackney coaches, which suggested the funeral of some poor poet. He noted also the number of his children—all little boys—who quite filled one mourning coach.

As I said, Davenant and his friend Killigrew are somewhat tedious figures, reappearing again and again like the supers in a stage army. I have, therefore, merely touched on the salient passages of their too familiar history.

Readers of that entertaining book, Cibber's "Apology," will read the lively picture he draws of the period which succeeded the reign of Davenant and Killigrew, and the general theatrical anarchy and confusion that reigned. We hear of nothing but "revolts," secessions, appeals, and contentions. Even the well-known "union" of the Patents seemed only to lead to fresh troubles. This was, no doubt, owing to the division of authority

which had now set in, the Patents being "worked" by a company, as it were, and held in shares. The original patentees being familiar with the stage could perform their managerial duties with efficiency, but when, from the numerous petitions to the courts, we find dames and noblemen of high degree controlling the house merely as a speculation, to be frustrated by one of their number who was acting as manager, nothing but disaster could be expected.

As we have said, every sort of calling seems to furnish the stuff out of which, as it is thought, a manager might be fashioned. An ambassador and soldier had already appeared; and the next that attempted the duty was a "little pettifogging lawyer," as he has been described. It is curious that Cibber, so full and generally accurate, should have introduced this personage quite abruptly, and without explaining how and when he came into office; neither does he give his name. He proved to be Christopher Rich, who, with his son John, of harlequin fame, fills a large space in theatrical politics. Rich, the father, had need of all his legal skill to deal with the turbulence and jealousies of his players, and his first principle seems to have been to make the undertaking "pay." He may, indeed, be said to have literally applied the arts of "management"—the French word "*ménagement*"—to his enterprise, furnishing the origin of the term. He and his son seem to have been characters in their way, and not without a taste of eccentricity.

The attorney obtained his share in a characteristic professional way, as one of his sons related the story to Moody, the actor. Sir Thomas Skipwith, one of the sharers, owed money to a client of Rich's, and when pressed for payment either mortgaged or sold his share to Rich for £80. The receipt was given, and both owners had, in consequence, to buy off the claims of the Skipwith family for a large sum. In this fashion the attorney became manager, and brought with him into the enterprise all the disreputable arts of the lower practitioners of his order. His one rule was never to pay either his actors or the owners whose interests he was supposed to represent. As is shown from legal documents he came into occupation in 1690, holding two shares out of about twenty.

One would have thought that, as the position of the patentees was so advantageous in reference to the actors, there would be

complete control; for the actor, if discharged, could not find another place where he could be employed; and there was an agreement between the proprietors of the rival house that no discharged player should be taken on at the other house for a certain time. This understanding continued almost within living memory. But the actor, even though fast bound by a contract, may contrive to carry it out in so disagreeable and troublesome a way as to make it advantageous for both parties that a revision on more favourable terms shall take place. Rich, however, seems to have enjoyed treating his men as bond slaves, and relished this pastime so keenly that he indulged in it almost at the sacrifice of his interests. It is amusing to see how he was baffled. One of his company thus describes him:—"Our good master was as *sly a tyrant* as ever was at the head of a theatre; for he gave the actors more liberty and fewer days' pay than any of his predecessors; he would laugh with them over a bottle, and bite them in their bargains; he kept them poor that they might not be able to rebel; and sometimes merry that they might not think of it: all their articles of agreement had a clause in them that he was sure to creep out at, viz., their respective salaries were to be paid in such a manner and proportion as others of the same company were paid; which, in effect, made them all, when he pleased, but limited sharers of loss, and himself sole proprietor of profits; and this loss or profit they only had such verbal accounts of as he thought proper to give them. It is true, he would sometimes advance them money (but not more than he knew, at most, could be due to them) upon their bonds; upon which, whenever they were mutinous, he would threaten to sue them. This was the net we danced in for several years; but no wonder we were dupes, while our master was a lawyer." This reveals in a curious way the helpless situation of the performers.

(To be continued).



The First Nights of My Young Days.

BY GODFREY TURNER.

[THIRD PAPER.]

IT could not have been long after my first juvenile visit to Drury Lane that a very remarkable book, "The Tour of a German Prince," which, in many respects, holds as good of English habits now, I am sorry to say, as it held then, was the talk of literary circles—indeed, of circles that made no pretence to be literary. Where there is no pretence on either side—no pretence on the part of writer or reader—criticism seems endowed with a peculiar force. A man who says what he thinks, and says it fairly well, may be sneered at for his *naïveté*; that is quite probable, but he will be at least piquant enough to be read. "The German Prince" possessed piquancy in its most graceful form. As I have said, circumstances made me an early reader. These volumes (they were two, as originally published) found their way into our house, and a great part of them found their way into my young mind, for I was accustomed to hear a good deal of what was going on in the world (as all children should be allowed to do), and thus was able to apply much that I had read. The German Prince, at that time anonymous, or wearing, so to say, a gauze mask of anonymity, had seen Ducrow at Drury Lane, perhaps a year or two before I had seen Wallack at that theatre. And I had also seen Ducrow, at Astley's, with great delight, which burned still in my childish memory when I had the book of travel before my eyes. I cannot quote with exactness the passage, concerning the horse-rider and posturist, that gave me a pleasure such as any fairly intelligent child feels when his own crude thoughts come back to him in mature language, so that he says to himself, "That is how I would have written or spoken if I could." But the words and their very trick of rhetoric fastened on me, so that I daresay I could have repeated them with literal exactness when I had grown to more than

twice the age at which I read them first. The writer of those pages praised Ducrow's art as something that might have been made to ennoble ballet-action, and as a treasure thrown away on his circus performances, such as the "Neapolitan Fisherman" and the "Horseman of Venice," an absurdity so laughed at that the equestrian act in question was changed into the somewhat decently congruous "Courier of St. Petersburg."

It was of Ducrow's impersonations of classic statuary that the Prince was speaking; and he passed quietly over the fact that these transcendant posturings graced a stage from which Kean and the higher drama, for the representation of which this great national theatre held a patent right, were for the time banished. With such discreditable anomalies, since removed by the extension of equal rights to all theatres, the German Prince had nothing to do. He said, and truly said, that the Astleyan gymnast's classic attitudinising far surpassed any of the *tableaux* of their character on the Continent. Yet there was much excellence of the same kind at the Franconi Circus. Ducrow, at Drury Lane, posed on a high pedestal in the middle of the stage. His elastic dress was exquisitely and almost incredibly true to his shape, fitting without a semblance of a wrinkle. A blue vein here and there delicately suggested marble; and it was to all appearance a veritable marble statue, the Farnese Hercules, that stood before the spectators. With a precision perfectly wonderful, the splendid figure slowly and gradually moved from its attitude till it fixed itself rigidly as the Apollo Belvidere. These transitions from hard marble, through imperceptible stages of ductility, into hard marble again, were accomplished with such consummate skill, such unerring accuracy, as we have none of us seen since, perchance, we saw Ducrow. Of course, all the various "properties," the bow of Apollo, the helmet, sword, and shield of the wrathful Achilles, the spear of Ajax, the attributive weapons and armour of all the Homeric heroes, were handed up to him in their turns from behind the pedestal. The Discobulus followed; then the listening slave; then the fighting and the dying Gladiator. All the later *tableaux vivants*, the Madame Warton displays, the clumsy classicism of "drawing-room entertainments," are not to be thought of in connection with the living model of strength and grace described by this German Prince. Get the book and read the description. You will be led to read much else that in no

wise relates to Ducrow, nor to the stage, nor to those First Nights which are now our immediate business.

I think most of them, for me, were at Sadler's Wells. And yet I know not ; for the Lyceum, both in the days of the Keeleys and afterwards, when Charles Mathews reigned with his Queen of Beauty and of Taste at his side, to add those subtle suggestions of refinement which only women think of, beguiled me full often ; nor was I indifferent to the attraction of revivals and originalities at the Haymarket ; nor to the Shakespearean charm of Drury Lane under Macready and the Princess's under Charles Kean. But let us make a beginning with Sadler's Wells. I was down on a visit in the New Forest when Phelps and Mrs. Warner put forth one of the most unpretending, one of the most quietly hopeful, of theatrical announcements ; and I resolved, together with a young companion and schoolfellow, we being each about nineteen years of age, and sound old critics in our own opinion, to rush up to London for the opening and entire regeneration of that queer, barn-like house by the New River head. We were staying near Lymington at that period ; and my friend, a precocious—and, alas ! unfortunate—artist, now at rest, had painted some of the scenery of the theatre there, at which time a comedian, destined soon afterwards to win renown at the Adelphi—an extremely droll creature named Wright—was awakening mirthful echoes through a not quite empty playhouse in a Hampshire village. Something delayed us in that forest solitude, and we did not reach Clerkenwell on the historic night that closed a Whit Monday of the epoch in which London boasted a population of two millions, less than half the total of to-day. “Macbeth” was the opening piece—“Macbeth” with the music of Locke and the singing witches of Middleton, and, in short, without the least attempt at departure from the conventional mode of representing the tragedy at that time. Tartans were worn by Phelps as the usurper, by Marston as Macduff, by Lacey as Banquo, by Graham, and all the other male performers. Archæological and otherwise correct revivals were to come in time, the reformation being modestly promised, as I remember, in that prospectus of which mention has just been respectfully made. My friend and I missed the treat we had planned for ourselves, as I have stated. We did not see “Macbeth” on the opening night ; but in the second week of the glorious campaign—which was to last how

long?—eighteen years, was it not?—I witnessed the production of “*Othello*.” Phelps was the Moor, of course. Not even Macready was so moving as he in the noble pathos of the part. The speech, “If it had pleased Heaven,” was a piece of declamation as magnificent as the same actor’s “Hear, Nature, hear!” the terrific curse in “*King Lear*,” which could only have been delivered more grandly by Edmund Kean. Phelps, as all who saw him in his prime will remember, trembled from head to foot with emotion; and when we have noticed other actors begin to shake, we have probably seen through the trick of conscious imitation, and have altogether refused to be taken in by any sham of that sort. Henry Marston, whom I do not remember to have seen or heard before that night, was the Iago. There was a strange mannerism, a peculiar intonation, to which I had to grow accustomed before I could like or even tolerate it. I saw at once he had founded his method on that of Charles Kemble. He had, indeed, adopted the Kemble pronunciation. In the word “thy,” for instance, which he made short, by analogy with “my,” as we pronounce that possessive pronoun when we say carelessly to a servant, “Fetch me my umbrella.” On this principle “thy” became indistinguishable from “the,” as in “the lowing herd;” and if Marston, addressing an agriculturist in the language of poetry or of the Society of Friends, had wished to say “thy lowing herd,” he would have been considerably hampered by his crotchetty rule of pronunciation. If I am not mistaken, Marston’s rigid orthoepy, like Kemble’s, led to the fancied analogy of “beard” and “heard,” so that the former had to be spoken as if it were the same as “bird,” which is too fearful a thing to be calmly considered.

But for all that, and for all the strangeness that grated on me at first in Marston’s manner, I admired his Iago, and never saw anything of the kind more finished than his acting towards the end of the play. His final exit was, in the highest degree, and in the most warrantable manner, effective. It hushed the house, and the appalled silence was followed by a spontaneous round of applause. So far as I know, Marston was quite original in that defiant, contemptuous, grinning, and deliberately devilish gaze he turned on Othello, and in his sudden motion to depart, with a quick jerk of the head and an impatient little stamp of the foot. Hudson, an excellent comedian, was the Cassio, and John Webster

the Roderigo of this representation at "the Wells." Mrs. Warner was a forcible and, at times, a really fine Emilia; and Miss Cooper, always painstaking and always traditional, played Desdemona very fairly. The anachronism occurs to me that she was uncommonly like what I should fancy Miss Marion Terry to be as "the gentle lady married to the Moor."

Very few months or weeks went by before my next "First Night" at Sadler's Wells. But meanwhile Phelps had put on the little stage a string of stock pieces. Any project he then had of an ambitious revival was prudently deferred. Such plays as could easily be given were given in quick succession. Always careful in rehearsal, and always surrounded by actors who knew those plays by heart, he was able for a time to rely on the intrinsic merit and proved popularity of everything in his immediate repertory; and he would change his bill twice, thrice, or oftener in the week. By the time I went to see Massinger's "City Madam," the first night of its production, and the pit being by no means full, Phelps had already presented his audiences with "The Stranger," "The Jealous Wife," "Werner," "The Merchant of Venice," "The School for Scandal," "Virginus," "The Rivals," "The Wife," "The Bridal," "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," and "King John." This play of Massinger's, "The City Madam," was the first of Phelps's novelties—so far, that is to say, as his public understood the difference between old and new. Everybody had seen some or other of those plays just enumerated—had at all events heard of them—but "The City Madam" was beyond the experience of the histrionic generation. An adaptation of the play, with a different name, had, it is true, been given with doubtful success by Macready; but that can scarcely be said to have counted. Phelps designed as close an acting reproduction of the original as could be managed, but even he felt compelled to bring round Luke Frugal to humanity before the audience had quite done with him. The story moralises the old proverb about a beggar on horseback. Luke is a pitiable dependant in the house of his rich brother, and is sent on menial errands by the proud, stuck-up family, one right-hearted maiden alone showing him kindness. His first entrance on the stage is with a number of parcels he has been to fetch for his imperious sister-in-law, Lady Frugal, a character into the loud, vulgar ferocity of which Mrs. Warner entered with but too powerful an assumption of truth

and gusto. A trick is played upon Luke, who is made to fancy himself rich: and from the submissive, cringing hanger-on, he becomes far more outrageous than his brother. In the Sadler's Wells version, most of the incidents of Massinger's plot were followed up to a certain point, and then the severity of the Elizabethan dramatist, a severity in accordance with the nature of the man he drew, was relaxed, in deference to the tenderness of the "gods." Phelps was hardly to be blamed for this concession to sentiment, false as it was to life and to art of the high and true stamp, such as we lost in losing the poetical English drama. Could he but have stuck to his text he would have done well—and been hissed for his pains. He thought it much better that Luke should reform, become gentle all of a sudden at remembrance of a kind word, and at the sight of the damsel who had spoken it. Mr. Phillip Massinger was not at hand to say, "No, really Mr. Samuel Phelps, it won't do. You *must* excuse me. This Luke Frugal is my Luke Frugal, not yours; and you will have the goodness to leave him alone."

"The Wonder," or, to give poor, frail Mrs. Centlivre's comedy its full original title, "The Wonder a Woman Keeps a Secret," was a play in which I had greatly desired to see Phelps. A portrait of Lewis in the chief male character, Don Felix, was familiar to me—very familiar, for I saw it night and morning, side by side with a mask of Garrick, as far back as I can remember. But somehow I missed the first night of its representation at Sadler's Wells, and I never saw Phelps in the play. I remember he was to be supported by Jane Mordaunt, who bore an exaggerated likeness to her sister, Mrs. Nisbett. Ah! those exaggerated likenesses, how they spoil one's fancy for the face they caricature! There were fatal resemblances of the same kind in more than one theatrical family I have known: sticks of actors, with the aggravated peculiarities of their fathers in voice, look, and gait, but, at the same time, no more *like* their fathers than I to What's-his-name. Miss Jane Mordaunt was like her sister, only more so; ever so much too much more so. I could not possibly have liked Miss Mordaunt in Donna Violante; and who knows but that my dissatisfaction might have extended to Phelps as Don Felix? The first season at Sadler's Wells, under the Phelps and Warner management, did not close till a serious vindication of Shakespeare's integrity had been made. "Richard the Third"

was given, pure and simple. This was Phelps's first great blow at Colley-Cibborean nonsense. And it told. But "Richard the Third" was not one of my First Nights at Islington, so let it pass.

Nor was "The Lady of Lyons" a First Night event with me anywhere at any time. Nevertheless, I can hardly forbear speaking of the Sadler's Wells representation of that play, which I saw many times in divers places. Mrs. Warner's Pauline was a vast and commanding performance, in which she resembled more the mother of the Gracchi than the daughter of citizen and bourgeois Deschapelles. You surmise that I never quite liked her look and style? Candidly, no; but I have seen her to advantage at times, and am willing to admit that she had "fine moments" amid hours of heaviness. Of the three or four *Hermiones* it has been my fate to behold, hers was a long way the best; nor could I hint at a single flaw in it. It was in Phelps's second season that this beautiful play, the scorn of the eighteenth century, was presented to a Sadler's Wells audience. The acting was as good throughout as patient zeal and conscience, with the indispensable addition of dramatic capability, could make it. There are some long scenes, with long speeches in them; but they were taken in such entire good faith by all the players alike, from first to last, that not a line seemed excessive. Phelps has himself told me more than once that nothing but thrifty management, for which his partner, Greenwood, was most to be thanked, could have carried on the war. But the low salaries did not lessen the determination of every man and every woman, it might be added every child, to help in lifting up the play. The little girl who played *Mamillius*, for example, did her spiriting with manifest determination to earn and to deserve her humble pay, just as much as if it had been more than all the other salaries put together. Phelps, of course, was *Leontes*, a tyrant of the right fabulous and impossible kind. *Polixenes*, King of Bohemia, that ancient realm concerning whose "sea coast" a very unnecessary pother has been made—as if the limits of kingdoms had been the same in all ages, mythical and modern, or that poets are not to be listened to unless they are Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society!—was represented respectably, if not royally, by Mr. H. Mellon. An almost painfully painstaking actor, Mr. Graham, shortest in stature of two or three who have borne that name in bills of the play, was *Camillo*, and excellently he acquitted himself. But, indeed, has it not

already been claimed for this fine Shakespearean revival that it was thoroughly well acted from first to last? Harley could not have given us a more comically knavish Autolycus than did Anthony Younge. The rustic revels at the sheep-shearing were pleasantly enlivened by the three-part ballad, "Get you gone, for I must go," in which Autolycus sings with Mopsa and Dorcas. One of these shepherdesses, I recollect, was Miss Eliza Travers, a useful member of the Phelps and Greenwood company for many years. Scharf was exactly fitted with the clown; and though the old shepherd did not come into quite such good keeping as that of Mr. Cooke, who played the part at the Marylebone Theatre, under Mrs. Warner, after her secession from the Sadler's Wells partnership, there was nothing to complain of; rather was there much in Mr. Williams's rustic representation to commend. Henry Marston, as Florizel, and Miss Cooper, as Perdita, acted as if they felt how necessary it is, with such a play as this, that every line should be spoken in the simplest spirit. If actors and audience cannot be brought into one tolerably clear understanding as to the nature of a pastoral, much better leave such things alone. Burlesque and buffoonery had not wrought according to their nature in those times, and the magic of poetry held in subjection a Sadler's Wells gallery, spellbound by thoughts beyond the reaches of their souls.

A name I have omitted in speaking of "The Winter's Tale" at Sadler's Wells is the name of George Bennett, who played Antigonus. Indeed, I have likewise passed over the hearty, downright Mrs. Marston, whose Paulina was a most refreshing piece of earnestness; and the quaint and airy Mr. Hoskins, who, being no disdainer of small parts, brought into prominent freshness one of the gentlemen subordinates, whom Shakespeare is so fond of sending on to speak dainty amenities, in a high conversational tone, as if each were a Pembroke or a Sydney of private life. But it is of Bennett that I now venture to say a word, in remembrance of his genuine comedy, more than in praise of his tragedy, which was stilted, heavy, and monotonous. His humour was unconscious; is there any humour which is not? for to be intentionally humorous is to be a ninny and a bore, just as "'tis dull to be as witty as you can." Antigonus is a court gentleman, charged by his sovereign with the most unpleasant duty of child-dropping, in recompense for which naughty act he gets eaten by a

vengeful bear. There is nothing comic about Antigonus, though he is forced into an undignified and ludicrous position by Leontes, who commands him to take up from the floor a baby—stage babies are ticklish subjects in serious situations!—and carry it “to some remote and desert place.” With dry gravity did George Bennett obey the King; and, on the whole, the gallery was indulgent in its abstinence from vulgar chaff. Indeed, such laughter as there was seemed to be *with* Antigonus, not *at* him, being rather turned upon Leontes. For instance, when the tyrant loudly rates his too obedient lord, and calls him “lozel,” telling him he deserves to be hanged because he will not—that is, cannot—stay his wife’s tongue, and when Antigonus drily answers

“ Hang all the husbands
That cannot do that feat, you’ll leave yourself
Hardly one subject—”

the warm sympathy of manhood suffrage in the audience prompted a distinct and hearty round of applause.

Thalia ought laughingly to have snatched George Bennett from the doleful embrace of her sister Muse. He was never meant for Melpomene. That serious and buskined patroness of the tragic drama could well have spared the man who was a better Benjamin Stout than the original David Rees himself. Few actors could have played Caliban as Bennett did, or have made up the serious comedy of the drunken trio, with the Stephano of Younge and the Trinculo of Scharf, more unctuously. That, by the by, was the secret of Bennett’s comic humour; it was serious also. I think of him as the hot, floundering, and perspiring Radical, Stout, and the wonderful solemnity of his proposal for cutting down the Speaker’s salary: “Now, I have a brother-in-law, who takes the chair at the vestry, and who has assured me, in confidence, that he is prepared to undertake the duties of Speaker for half the money.” To hear Bennett deliver these words in his loud, oracular tone—fussy, yet deliberate—to mark the round protuberant eyes glaring beneath those comically ferocious brows; to wait while the slow, gasping pomposity of his parochial voice, half spluttered, half rolled out the comical little speech, was to feel somehow that the fun was not meant at all for fun, and was immeasurably funnier in consequence. A great revival by Phelps, one of my First Nights to boot, was Beaumont and Fletcher’s fine play, “A King and No King,” in which the trying part of Arbaces seemed to rend the

actor-manager's strong, nervous frame. In this play George Bennett did enact Bessus, in whose warlike person the qualities of Shakespeare's Antient Pistol and of Ben Jonson's Captain Bobadil are blended, together with an exquisite turn for technical arbitration. On the whole, Bessus, properly played, is as richly comic a character, with regard to its acting capabilities, as exists in the whole range of the poetical drama; but the least sign of consciousness, of comedy prepense, would be its ruin. As it is in great measure a question of physique and of a peculiar organism, quite apart from intellectual and artistic qualifications, no offence or pique need be provoked by the assertion that Bessus, just now, is an unactable part.

In the first place, it seems to demand a big, burly, pompous person, with a colossal stride—one who speaks with great deliberateness, *ore rotundo*, sticks his chest out, and rolls his head and eyes like a wax brigand at a fair. Wanted, a "heavy man," of the old type, for Bessus—a man whose tragic cast is as exaggerated as, on the other hand, his comedy is unforced! With what heartiness of natural humour, with what reality and total abstinence from any show of fun, the comic scenes in "A King and No King" were played at Sadler's Wells! The mock gravity of the language was never disturbed by the faintest suspicion of consciousness on the faces of the actors, who seemed to have studied their parts from the long-sworded bullies of whom Alsatia afforded good choice of models for dramatists in the age of Francis Fletcher and John Beaumont.

(*To be continued.*)



Our Musical-Box.

WHEN, some nine months ago, Mr. Bernhard Stavenhagen visited this country for the first time, under the ægis of his master and protector, Canon Liszt, those English musicians who were fortunate enough to hear him play in public or in private recognised, with rare unanimity, that in the person of this remarkable young artiste a "bright particular star" had manifestly revealed itself upon the firmament of pianism. Liszt thought very highly of him, and during his brief sojourn in London more than once took occasion to inform persons of considerable influence in musical circles that young Stavenhagen was not only the best pupil he had had under tuition for many years past, but, as an executant, was in every respect qualified to rank on terms of equality with the first pianists of the present day. Master and pupil were manifestly bound together by artistic sympathy as well as personal affection; and the deep reverence displayed by the youthful artiste towards the venerable composer was quite refreshing to observe in these offhand days. In society, where I met them together several times, Stavenhagen would never play unless he had received Liszt's express permission to do so, and, before he sat down to the piano, invariably took instructions from the *maestro* as to what particular piece he should perform. I only heard him play three times—once in public, once at a party given by Henry Irving in Liszt's honour, and once at my own house—and upon each occasion the works selected for performance were of his great master's composition, extraordinarily ornate and teeming with technical difficulties. His rendering of them was superb, reminding me of Liszt's own unrivalled execution and versatility of tone-production in days long past, when I had enjoyed frequent opportunities, in Vienna and Rome, of hearing the king of pianists render his own inspirations with physical powers then unimpaired by age. Stavenhagen appeared to me last year to have at his command all the Lisztian varieties of touch, ranging from hammer-like vigour of impact to feathery lightness, and to be endowed, moreover, with a musical understanding of an uncommonly lofty and comprehensive order. The renewed experience of his remarkable abilities afforded to me, by his performances at a concert given by him on the 18th ult. at St. James's Hall, fully confirmed the high opinion of those abilities which I had previously formed. On the occasion referred to Mr. Stavenhagen's programme included familiar works by Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin, as well as an interesting selection from less well-known compositions by his lamented master. To interpret Beethoven sonatas in a manner equally satisfactory to the musical ear

and intelligence is, and in all probability ever will be, the supreme test of a pianist's capacities. Through this paramount ordeal Mr. Stavenhagen passed triumphantly. His rendering of the opening movement in the "Moonlight" was singularly poetical and reposeful; he played the beautiful scherzo with exquisite grace, and displayed unsurpassable power in the stormy finale. Equally admirable was his performance of the noble sonata in E minor (opus 90); no living pianist could have played it better. With a crisp and dainty touch he fluttered through Schumann's fanciful "Papillons," to the keen delight of his audience—a genuinely musical one—and then addressed himself to the interpretation of three works by Chopin, which well nigh everybody present knew by heart. This was the least effective part of the entertainment. With regard to the playing of Chopin, Mr. Stavenhagen does not altogether meet my views. He is somewhat too forcible and emphatic in his reading of that composer's delicate and pathetic thoughts. Technically, of course, his performance was irreproachable; but it seemed to me that his soul was not in perfect communion with the spirit of Frédéric Chopin. When he turned to Liszt's marvels, however, Mr. Stavenhagen found himself in a congenial musical atmosphere, and electrified his hearers by a succession of *tours de forces*, the dash and brilliancy of which were only equalled by the minute accuracy of their every executant detail. Outbursts of genuine enthusiasm greeted his magnificent renderings of two of the so-called "Paganini" studies, upon which many an eminent pianist has tried his or her hands, within my remembrance, far less successfully than this slender youth. In short, Mr. Stavenhagen proved himself to be an inimitable exponent of the Liszt *technique*, and thoroughly justified the verdict pronounced upon him by the first of English musical critics, viz., that he was a musician "of immense promise." The instrument he played on, a Bechstein concert-grand, was one of the finest pianofortes that have ever figured in an English concert-room.

Another interesting musical event of the past month was the *début* in London of Herr or Professor Benno Schoenberger of Vienna, whose fame had gone before him, Dr. Hanslick having written of him: "As regards beauty of touch, no other pianist stands so near to Rubinstein as Herr Schoenberger." Although his appearance is strikingly youthful, Vienna and Madrid have conferred professional rank upon this accomplished artist, who is certainly entitled to high consideration as a technician of the "first flight." In the matter of execution, indeed, his resources are so unlimited that the consciousness of their possession betrays him into extravagances of acceleration, with relation to *tempi*, quite incompatible with perfect satisfaction on the part of his hearers. In plain words, he "hurries" pretty nearly everything he plays. Moreover, whilst his mere manipulation is faultless, and his tone-production amply justifies Hanslick's eulogium, his renderings of classical works, not merely intended to display elasticity of fingers and wrist, lack sentiment and impressiveness alike. These shortcomings were conspicuously

apparent in his interpretations of the great Brahms' sonata in C major, and of Schumann's noble Opus 22, the intrinsic interest of which masterly compositions suffered seriously by Professor Schoenberger's treatment of them. On the other hand he played Raff's intolerably difficult *Fantasie* and *Fugue* (op. 91) with amazing force and facility, and rattled off Moszkowsky's intricate *Tarantelle* at a pace which would have astonished its composer—himself one of the most dexterous pianists of the day—and, as the saying goes, "fairly took my breath away." Mendelssohn's delightful second *Capriccio* and Haydn's bright "*Perpetuum Mobile*" he played much too fast, as well as two of Chopin's most formidable studies, and a graceful little *Minuet* by Mozart. If Professor Schoenberger could control his fiery impulsiveness, he would be a great as well as a dexterous pianist. Until he can do so, his playing will continue to be a source of wonder, rather than of admiration, to intelligent musicians and music-lovers. I may observe that on the 14th ult. he was to a certain extent handicapped by the pianoforte selected for his use, a wiry, ungrateful instrument, from which Rubinstein himself might have failed, with all his art of touch, to conjure forth a "concord of sweet sounds."

Amongst the new compositions which I have received during the past month is a singularly beautiful anthem (Novello, Ewer, and Co.) for treble solo, quartet, and chorus by the ever-green musical poet, Charles Kensington Salaman, intitled "*Have Mercy Upon Me.*" Every phrase of this highly-finished work is imbued with genuine devotional feeling, and the musical expression given to the passionate appeals to Divine mansuetude in the opening solo is extremely pathetic. The "half-century of song" upon which Mr. Salaman can look back with justifiable pride—in which all his musical compatriots participate—has not dulled the inventive faculty or impaired the constructive ability of the *doyen* of English composers. The well-known publishing house, Joseph Williams, of Berners-street, has forwarded to me several novelties which I propose to notice *seriatim*, giving the *pas* to a charming "*Slumber Song*" for violin and piano by Mr. Wilfrid Bendall, written with equal grace and feeling for either instrument. Of a lengthy sonata in C minor by Mr. St. Vincent Jervis—obviously an erudite and accomplished musician—it is sufficient to say that the first movement is Cramerish, the second Schumannesque, and the third Beethovenesque. All three are pleasant and instructive playing. The same composer's "*Variations Sérieuses*" are carefully put together after classical models, and possess every merit except that of originality. A "*Caprice Espagnol*," by M. Henri Roubier, might just as well be called a *Polacca*; under any name it would be feeble and pretentious rubbish. M. Roubier's "*Sarabande No. 2*" will very probably find favour with a certain class of drawing-room pianists. I am assured on indisputable authority that there is a demand for this class of composition. Pretty, unaffected, musicianly, and agreeably easy to play are the "*Gavotte and Minuet*" by Mr. Monk Gould, through whose writings for the pianoforte meanders a vein of genial tunefulness. "*The Belle of the Village*" proves that Mr. Keussmann can construct an

average waltz as effectively as a good many other manufacturers of dance music, and the same may be said (*mutatis mutandis*) of Mr. Grenville's set of Lancers, made up of airs from "Little Jack Sheppard." Mr. Williams' instrumental publications for January, 1887, also include a clever arrangement for violin and piano by Mr. Davidson Palmer of airs from "Guillaume Tell," and Nos. 7 and 8 of a series of "Pleasing Melodies" for the same instruments, for which Mr. John Adcock is responsible. Of the songs recently published by Mr. Williams, three deserve particular notice—Mr. Gilbert's "Recollections," a simple and sympathetic melody; Miss M. A. Kingston's "Why Have We Waited," no less fresh, spontaneous, and "taking" than previously published songs by this richly-gifted young composer; and Mr. W. A. Aikin's "More and More," a drawing-room ballad of an eminently popular character. I heartily congratulate Mr. Whewall Bowling upon two of his "Four Songs for Tenor" (Stanley Lucas, Weber, and Co.), the third and fourth of the set. "The Morrow that Never Broke" is full of true tenderness, not contrived, but inspired; and "To-day and To-morrow" is in every respect a composition of which it would be difficult to speak too highly—admirably written for the voice, and enriched by a thoughtful and scholarly accompaniment. Mr. Bowling's setting of some exquisite words by Margaret Delane, under the title of "The Message of the Rose," is by no means adequate to the merit of the verses, which have a poetical value far above the ordinary standard of latter-day lyrics. "A Venetian Wooing" is conventional and colourless. Messrs. Chappell and Co. have lately published another of Miss Kingston's songs, "When Leaves are Green," which fully deserves the unqualified praise that has been already lavished upon it by the leading musical critics of the London weekly and daily press. A prettier pastoral strain has not been added to the vocalist's *repertoire* for many a day, and I doubt not that it will figure in countless concert programmes during the approaching season.

CLAVICHORD.

"RUDDYGORE; OR, THE WITCH'S CURSE."

[An entirely Original Supernatural Opera, in two acts, by W. S. GILBERT and ARTHUR SULLIVAN.
Produced at the Savoy Theatre, on Saturday, January 22, 1887.

Robin Oakapple ...	Mr. GEORGE GROSSMITH.	Sir Roderick Murga-	} Mr. RICHARD TEMPLE.
Richard Dauntless ...	Mr. DURWARD LELY.	troyd (deceased) ...	
Sir Despard Murga-	} Mr. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.	Rose Maybird ...	Miss LEONORA BRAHAM.
troyd ...		Mad Margaret ...	Miss JESSIE BOND.
Adam Goodheart ...	Mr. RUDOLPH LEWIS.	Daine Hannah ...	Miss ROSINA BRANDRAM.
Zorah ...	...	...	Miss J. FINDLAY.

By the time these lines will be published, every newspaper reader in the United Kingdom will be acquainted with the plot of "Ruddygore" to its minutest detail; wherefore I will say little about that ingenious fiction in this place, save that it is by no means the least remarkable illustration of Mr. Gilbert's peculiar talent for constructing a coherent story out of wild incongruities and staggering absurdities. In "Ruddygore," as in the "Bab Ballads," nobody does or says anything that might reasonably be expected from him or her in a natural condition of human

affairs, nor does anything happen in accordance with mundane possibilities—far less probabilities. The characters are carefully selected from the types of extra-human oddity that people the world of Gilbertian fancy, and account for their deeds and words—nay, for their very existence—by subtle sophisms, the cynical flavour of which is peculiarly piquant to the intellectual palate. They make no attempt to claim your sympathies, for the motives prompting their actions and utterances, as a rule, are selfish or cruel; but their incongruities incessantly appeal to your sense of humour. The *dramatis personæ* of “Ruddygore,” like those of all Mr. Gilbert’s preceding operatic libretti, are afflicted by comic *dementia*. To a man and woman they are lunatics; perfectly harmless, however, and amazingly entertaining. There is abundant method in their madness—but it is the method of insanity, the crooked ways and unexpected departures of which are obviously suggestions of brilliant, but more or less deranged, intellects. Incurable monomaniacs frequently display the same strange contrasts of cunning and *naïveté* that are exhibited by the Murgatroyd brethren, by Richard Dauntless, Rose Maybud, and even by the pretentious, but thick-headed, ghost who commands a small army of Ruddygore family spectres, the Bucks and Blades who associate with an habitual criminal of hideous notoriety, and the Professional Bridesmaids, who “attend every day from ten to four,” and are remunerated by the proceeds of a pious bequest. All these people, happily, are extremely amusing as well as inveterately mad; and their distracted vagaries are admirably calculated to elicit peals of ungovernable laughter from the most saturnine breast.

The performance of “Ruddygore,” on the night of its production, was from first to last unexceptionable. All the old Savoy favourites of the metropolitan public were fitted with parts affording to them ample opportunities for the advantageous display of their respective humorous specialities, and each one of them, from a theatrical point of view covered him or herself with glory. It was Mr. Grossmith’s unusual duty to be assiduously virtuous throughout the greater part of the first act and reluctantly vicious during the second; he did it admirably in both cases, and the *nuances* of his psychical transformation from the model of bucolic amiability to the incarnation of truculent ferocity were delineated with a light but masterly touch. To Mr. Barrington was entrusted a part embodying the converse process to that developed in Mr. Grossmith’s *role*. When Despard Murgatroyd is introduced to the audience he has been compulsorily wicked for ten years—and he looks it. Ever since he wrongfully came into his elder brother’s title and estate he has steeped himself in crime once a day, although Nature designed him for a philanthropist of the first water; but the discovery of the rightful baronet relieves him from the obligation to sin, under which he has theretofore repined, and enables him to wallow in piety ever afterwards. Mr. Barrington was positively lurid with concentrated wickedness whilst fulfilling the terms of the curse, and unctuous with holy benevolence after he had safely transferred his incumbency of guilt to the administration of his.

luckless brother. Better comic acting than his, or more highly finished, I have never seen and never wish to see. No less full a meed of hearty praise is due to Mr. Lely for his superb impersonation of the rollicking British sailor, whose bluff and cheery exterior masks the soul of a mean, cowardly, black-hearted traitor—the triple-distilled essence of selfishness and falsehood. Mr. Lely played this difficult part with equal vigour and refinement; he sang every note of his music delightfully; and, to the surprise of everyone present, made the great hit of the evening by dancing a hornpipe with such inimitable featness and spirit that it fairly brought the house down. Miss Braham, in the character of a lovely foundling, regulated by the laws of etiquette, and keeping one eye, if not both, steadfastly fixed upon the matrimonial main chance, was every whit as charming and seductive as she had been, some years ago, in the analogous part of *Patience*. In Gilbertian dialogue and Sullivan-esque music alike this gifted lady is invariably at home—never more so, to my mind, than as *Rose Maybud*, the wily village maid, whose resolve to dispose of her peerless charms in the most advantageous market is unshaken by the caprices of *Destiny*, and finally endows her with a title and unlimited wealth. As *Mad Margaret*, a provincial maniac converted to district visiting by marriage with a reformed criminal, Miss Bond demonstrates the versatility of her dramatic talent more conclusively than she has hitherto had occasion to do. Her *Bedlamite* wildness and *Quakerish* primness were equally “excellent fooling,” and she sang a touching ballad with a pathos that went straight to the hearts of her hearers, because it was perfectly genuine and unaffected. Miss *Brandram*’s part is small and not over grateful. Need I say that she played it artistically, or that her fine voice and singing were prominent features in the musical part of the entertainment? The chorists of both sexes, too, were as thoroughly efficient as *Savoy* chorists have ever been. I can pay them no higher compliment. To say that the scenery, costumes, and appointments were picturesque, tasteful and splendid is only to repeat what has been truthfully said about every one of Mr. Carte’s successive productions. The military uniforms (temp. *George III.*) and historical toggerie of the *Murgatroyd* ancestral apparitions were triumphs of theatrical tailordum, inspired by antiquarian research.

The music of “*Ruddygore*” is so melodious and graceful throughout that it may be accepted as a supreme illustration of the principle—or is it instinct?—that has guided Arthur Sullivan during his brilliant career as an operatic composer, viz., that beauty is the soul of Art. Whilst Wagner, Berlioz, Brahms, Saint Saens, and other modern composers of indisputable genius have strenuously endeavoured to prove that ugliness is artistic, our leading English musician has stuck to beauty, and has been amply rewarded for his unswerving constancy. Unless I be much mistaken, “*Ruddygore*” will rank amongst his *chefs d’œuvre*. Its most fascinating numbers are a duet (Act I.) for soprano and tenor, “*The Battle’s Roar*”; a delicious madrigal (Act I.), “*Where the Buds are Blossoming*”; and a ballad (Act II.), “*In Bygone Days*.” Excellent of

their kind are the robust sea song, "I Shipped, d'ye see"; the sprightly hornpipe that follows it; the plaintive ballad, "To a Garden"; the finale of Act I., "Oh, Happy the Lily"; and the grisly ghost song, "When the Night Wind," the orchestral accompaniment to which is unique in its dainty weirdness and wild witchery. The second act is less rife with memorable melodies than the first; but, *en revanche*, it is richer in those novel and subtle instrumental contrivances which Sullivan invents and elaborates with such amazing profusion and skill. There can be no doubt that by its admirable production of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest work the Savoy management has scored another of those shining and remunerative successes that its enterprise, intelligence, and good taste have repeatedly achieved—and merited.

CLAVICHORD.



Our Play-Box.

"THE CHURCHWARDEN."

A Farce, in Three Acts, translated from the German by Ogden and Cassell.

Produced, for the first time in London, at the Olympic Theatre, on December 16, 1886.

Daniel Chuffy ...	...	MR. EDWARD TERRY.	Mrs. Amelia Chuffy	MISS MARIA JONES.
Nathaniel Gaddam ...	...	MR. T. C. VALENTINE.	Kate ...	MISS CLARA COWPER.
Mr. Bearder, M.P. ...	...	MR. ALFRED BISHOP.	Amanda ..	MISS FLORENCE SUTHERLAND.
Frank Bilton ...	...	MR. J. W. ERSKINE.	Jane ...	MISS LOTTIE HARCOURT.
Alfred ...	...	MR. J. G. TAYLOR.		

This piece is a new or renewed version of a familiar story, which shows once more the dreadful heinousness of "a visit to London" by a married man, who has further dined at a restaurant, and has been seen speaking to a young lady. From whence it might be argued either that the rural mind is still sensitively innocent; or, again, that rural husbands are in the habit of veiling all sort of iniquities under a pretext of a necessary "visit to London." But the real explanation, we believe, is the necessary distortion of the play, owing to the original text, which portrays foreign husbands, as making use of such business visits to Paris or Berlin for purposes of "gaiety," as it is understood in those countries. Hence the story is coherent enough; but with us such a spectacle would naturally shock. Hence, too, is substituted the pardonable and almost schoolboyish escapade of going to restaurants, and all the subsequent agonies of impending detection by the spouse at home; all which is truly absurd.

Given this defect, "The Churchwarden" is decidedly amusing, and is received with roars of laughing, owing to the untiring exertions of Mr. Terry, whose grotesque inflections of voice, and more grotesque "faces," are farcical to a degree. They do not claim to be regulated by the rules of comedy, whereof, unconsciousness of being absurd, is a primary

cause. Here was the success of Mr. Daly's company of American players. The most effective point, and the one that produced the loudest laughter, seemed to be the repeated sitting down on the Churchwarden, as he lay on a sofa hidden by a plaid. But has not Swift said that the finest piece of wit never equals the success of pulling away a chair just as a person is about to sit down? Mr. Bishop, an excellent player, had a great share of this unconsciousness, and lent good effect to the whole. The Churchwarden has no particular known character nowadays, and, in the original, was probably a clergyman; I fancy, something in the style of a stout and slow-moving beadle was intended.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

"HARD HIT."

A play, in four acts, by Henry Arthur Jones, produced at the Haymarket Theatre on Monday, January 17, 1887.

Sir Baldwin Calvert ...	Mr. FRANK ARCHER.	Hon. Effingham Nangle ...	Mr. COMPTON COUTTS*
Tony Saxon ...	Mr. E. S. WILLARD.	Professor Marsh ...	Mr. FENTON.
Stephen Cudlip... ..	Mr. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.	Ferris ...	Mr. H. FERRAND.
Geoffrey Calvert ...	Mr. ARTHUR DACRE.	Joe Jeffcoat ...	Mr. P. BEN GREET.
Bratby ...	Mr. C. DODSWORTH.	Bertha Saxon ...	Miss MARION TERRY.
Major Fysh ...	Mr. HENRY KEMBLE.	Mrs. Carmine Ashbee ...	Miss MARY RORKE.
Lewis Frobisher, Q.C....	Mr. ULICK WINTER.	Cherry Jeffcoat ...	Miss LYDIA COWELL.

"Hard Hit," the new play by Mr. H. A. Jones, successfully produced at the Haymarket the other day, will hardly accomplish for its author's reputation what had been hoped by his more sanguine admirers. Its merits—and they are many—are those of stage craft rather than of dramatic creation. It excels, not in its study of human nature, but in its ingenious treatment of theatrical situation. Its dialogue, if seldom actually inadequate to the occasion, certainly never strikes the ear or remains in the memory. Its construction is sounder than its motive, and its story is much more interesting than are the characters who figure in it. The playwright, in short, keeps well within his approved resources, and his success is probably all the greater because he so studiously observes their limitations. So far as could be gathered from the evidences and impressions of a first night, this success admits of no doubt; nor does it seem likely that the popularity of "Hard Hit" will need whipping-up by any grave breach of journalistic etiquette, such as has recently been resorted to for the advertisement of another of its author's productions.

It would for many reasons have been a pity if "Hard Hit" had failed to make its mark. In these days of adaptation and revival, such a piece would deserve credit merely for being, as it is, not only new, but original. It displays much really clever workmanship, and it affords opportunity for a set of highly artistic and effective impersonations by the members of an exceptionally strong company. To give the full details of its story would occupy more space than can here be devoted to the subject, and would moreover merely emphasise one of the defects of the two introductory acts. Mr. Jones has not the art of masterly silence. He leaves little to the imagination in his

exposition of the circumstances under which Sir Baldwin Calvert's son Geoffrey, a ruined spendthrift, keeps secret his marriage with Bertha, the daughter of the bankrupt squire, Tony Saxon. This diffuseness would not much matter if all the explanation had the dramatic interest which belongs to the study of old Saxon's easy-going impecunious ways, a subordinate sketch endowed by Mr. Willard with fresher vitality than belongs to any of the other *dramatis personæ*. Mr. Saxon, as he sits in his garden cheerfully supping the ale which he has to substitute for an unattainable brandy-and-soda, pleasantly embodies that philosophy of contentment so delightfully sung by Calverley in the lines that tell how—

“The trout, the grouse, the early pea,
By such, if there, are freely taken :
If not, they munch with equal glee
Their bit of bacon.”

There is no parallel individuality about the Sir Baldwin of Mr. Frank Archer, nor does there seem any dramatic need to explain at such length this gentleman's very natural objection to the union between his son and Mr. Saxon's daughter. Strangely enough, the marriage of Geoffrey and Bertha, though known in the Saxon household, is not guessed by a couple of cunning conspirators—Stephen Cudlip, a promoter of bubble companies, and Mrs. Carmine Ashbee, a more or less fascinating adventuress. To each of these acquaintances of the Saxons it is important that what they believe to be the intended match should at once be broken off. By the aid of a low accomplice named Bratby, Cudlip has ferreted out Bertha's unsuspected claim to a large sum of money lying in the maiden name of her mother in the Court of Chancery. His object, therefore, is to marry the girl for her money, whilst Mrs. Ashbee's is to marry the man for himself. The scheme which they hit upon for separating the lovers is cunning enough, but seems, from Cudlip's point of view, to have, as we shall presently see, one fatal objection. Cudlip proposes to use Mrs. Ashbee as decoy to lure Miss Saxon to his chambers in Westminster late at night; and further to make sure, by means of an intentionally misdirected letter, that Geoffrey shall not only become aware of the suspicious visit, but shall have apparent proof of its being paid in answer to a most compromising invitation. The deception by which Mrs. Ashbee persuades her victim to call on Cudlip is plausible enough, or would be if Miss Mary Rorke had the least notion of playing the part of a she-Judas. Moreover, the pretext is artfully made to depend upon the imminent and discreditable peril in which Geoffrey finds himself in consequence of his losses on the turf, so that Bertha's mouth is conveniently closed when she most wishes to explain her conduct. Yet another good point in the showy scene of the heroine's disgrace is the subtle arrangement by which the villain's loud protestations of her perfect innocence are necessarily received by his friends and by Bertha's as the conventional white lies of nine-

teenth-century chivalry. It is all very telling—the dismay and passionate appeal of the unfortunate girl, the agonised doubt of those whom she loves best, the bystanders' inevitable shrug of the shoulders, the bland host's perfunctory repudiation of the deduction which no man of the world can possibly fail to make. It is all thoroughly convincing until one comes to ask oneself how it can possibly forward the arch-plotters' plans. For Mrs. Ashbee's purpose this exact fulfilment of the unscrupulous scheme is perfect. Geoffrey will break off his engagement, and that is what she has wished to effect. But what about Cudlip's wish to secure Bertha's hand? How is it conceivable, even to a man of his degrading views of human motive, that Miss Saxon will ever accept him after his share in the ruin of her reputation? He would be the very last suitor whom she would be likely to favour after Geoffrey had cast her off; and this a shrewd rogue like Cudlip would never have left out of his reckoning. One knows that by a merciful dispensation of providence big villains make big mistakes, but this particular blunder is out of all keeping with its perpetrator's character. It says much for Mr. Beerbohm-Tree's command of the arts, the air and the appearance of a successful intriguer that he should be able to impress us with the triumphant craft of a schemer so short-sighted as this. Mr. Tree has sometimes made the mistake, a pardonable one enough, of being over-zealous in his self-sacrificing delineations of iniquity. Here he keeps well within the picture, and his Cudlip is equally plausible and life-like whether stage-managing the surprise scene in his chambers or contemptuously snubbing his vulgar little ally, Bratby, or making his ilently defiant exit when things go against him, though his betrayal by his despised confederates. In Cudlip's capital scene with Bratby—which, by the way, is very awkwardly placed with regard to the supper party that is supposed to be going on in the adjoining room—Mr. Tree is excellently supported by Mr. Dodsworth, a young comedian rapidly making his mark by his observant study of eccentric characters. Another small part of which the most is made—the most is perhaps rather too much—is that of Major Fysh, whom Mr. Kemble makes a very amusing old satyr; and a third example of the significance which good acting may give to an insignificant rôle is afforded in Miss Lydia Cowell's too knowing but loyal little maid-servant Cherry.

The climax of the play is, of course, reached in the scene which has already been discussed, and in Geoffrey's sudden disclosure of the fact that Bertha is already his wife. It is a climax the full force of which is brought out by Miss Marion Terry's touching and graceful treatment of the heroine's agony of shame. Grace and pathos Miss Terry has often attained before: to these she here adds an earnest womanly dignity, which is not less welcome than effective. It is a pity that after this a whole act has to be devoted to the establishment of Bertha's innocence and the exhibition of her weak husband's.

fits of hysterical jealousy and half-hearted trust. Do what Mr. Arthur Dacre will—and he does very well indeed—he cannot rouse much sympathy for this feeble modern Othello, and one parts from Geoffrey Calvert with the conviction that he and Tony Saxon between them will very soon make ducks and drakes of his wife's unexpected fortune. If, however, the interest necessarily flags before the final fall of the curtain, the dramatist is at any rate too fertile of resource to lose the spectators' attention. To the last the situation is deftly handled, and the most is made of its more superficial possibilities. Hence it comes to pass that "Hard Hit," as acted at the Haymarket, is a play to be seen once with a great deal of pleasure, even though the impression which it ultimately leaves proves to be neither deep nor wholly satisfactory.

ERNEST A. BENDALL.

"THE LODGERS."

A Farce, in three acts, founded on a French vaudeville, by BRANDON THOMAS and MAURICE DE VERNEY.
Produced at the Globe Theatre on Tuesday, January 18, 1887.

Bernard O'Blathagan	..	Mr. CHARLES GLENNEY.	1st Policeman	...	Mr. NORMAN BENT.
Reginald Sparker	...	Mr. C. H. HAWTREY.	2nd Policeman	...	Mr. MILTON.
Benjamin Hundeebe	...	Mr. W. S. PENLEY.	Waiter	...	Mr. RANN.
Alphonse la Toupais	...	Mr. M. DE VERNEY.	Telegraph Boy	...	Mr. AYSON.
Muggridge	...	Mr. W. J. HILL.	Kitty	...	Miss BLANCHE HORLOCK.
Tom	...	Mr. WYES.	Amelia	...	Miss VANE FEATHERSTON.
Bill	...	Mr. BROOKE.	Mrs. Muggridge	...	Miss FANNY BROUGH.

"The Lodgers" is a version of a French vaudeville, "*Ma niece et mon ours*," which was adapted by Mr. Oxenford and afterwards by Mr. Herman, neither farce achieving much popularity. In old days, a French piece like this was very sensibly presented in one act, but the fashion now is to give us three-act farces, sometimes miscalled farcical comedies, and Messrs. Brandon Thomas and De Verney have accordingly set forth the story at that length, whereby it becomes terribly attenuated. The piece is honestly called a farce, and never, surely, was a more purely farcical or boisterous production placed on the stage.

The story, which need not be told in detail, introduces us to Mr. O'Blathagan, a naturalist, who makes a stuffed bear the repository of his savings, and possesses a fascinating niece, who is beloved by his three lodgers—a medical student, a hairdresser, and a Frenchman. The most important character in the piece, however, is a large box, in which the niece is supposed to be hidden for the purpose of being carried off by one of her lovers, and this box is tenanted in succession by a barber's dummy, the bear, and several of the characters, and is at all times the centre of the imbroglio. We are introduced also to a railway porter, named Muggridge, with a skittish wife, and, as this individual is supposed by the lovers to be another uncle of the heroine's, and he himself thinks their allusions to her refers to Mrs. Muggridge, shoots them into cellars and generally ill-treats them, it will be seen there is no lack of complications. The fault of the

piece is that it is too noisy, and the adaptors seem to think that the best way to end an act is with a pantomime "rally." That is all the more irritating, because the dialogue, when we are allowed to listen to it, is very smart, and Messrs. Thomas and De Verney can evidently do better things than permitting Mr. Hill to shoot some of the characters into a cellar, and let Mr. Penley climb on to a roof and fall through a skylight. They can write with point and humour, but they appear so anxious to introduce bustle and business that the dialogue seems quite a secondary consideration. It must be said, however, that if a piece is to be judged from the favour with which it is received by the audience, the verdict on "The Lodgers" must be a favourable one, for it was greeted with roars of laughter, and all concerned in it were vociferously summoned before the curtain. It is certainly amusing enough, though to many people it would be much more so with less horse-play.

The acting was excellent. Mr. Penley, one of the ablest eccentric comedians on the stage, was inimitable as the hairdresser, Mr. Hawtrey played neatly as the medical student, and M. de Verney gave us a good bit of character as the Frenchman. Mr. Glenney rattled through the part of O'Blathagan with much fervour, and Mr. Hill's humour was conspicuous in his Muggridge. Miss Blanche Horlock acted prettily and pleasantly as the heroine. Miss Fanny Brough was a most amusing representative of Mrs. Muggridge, and Miss Vane Featherston made the most of a small part of a servant girl.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

"MODERN WIVES."

A farce, in Three Acts, adapted by Ernest Warren from "Le Bonheur Conjugal" (by Albin Valabrégue).
Produced on Thursday, January 20, 1887, at the Royalty Theatre.

Caleb Chubb	...	...	MR. WILLIE EDOUIN.	Felix Doveton	...	...	MR. F. H. FRANCE.
Margery Chubb	...	...	MISS E. BRUNTON.	Dorothy Chubb	...	...	MISS EVA WILSON.
Valentine Honeysett	...	...	MR. MORTON SELTON.	Daniel Beeby	...	...	MR. EDWARD THIRLEY.
Agatha Honeysett...	...	...	MISS ALICE ATHERTON.	Matilda Beeby	...	...	MISS V. BENNETT.
Noel Goldring	...	...	MR. LYTTON SOTHERN.	Susanna Galloway	...	...	MISS MARIE HUDSPETH.
Grace Goldring	...	...	MISS OLGA BRANDON.	Bobbits	...	...	MASTER G. GAMBLE.

"Le Bonheur Conjugal" scarcely needs the testimony of a 200-nights' run in Paris to recommend itself to the appreciation of a London public, for so bright, clever, and ingenious a play would be a success wherever produced. It is true we cannot have the comedy in its original and unadulterated form, for, although teeming with funny situations and original ideas, they require a little modulation for the English stage, but the spirit of the piece can after all be faithfully retained, and Mr. Ernest Warren is to be warmly congratulated on this especial point in his adaptation, which was produced on Thursday evening, the 20th inst., at the Royalty Theatre. The dramatic ventures at the Parisian theatres last year were not, on the whole, successful, and it remained for M. Albin Valabrague to score alone with "Le Bonheur Conjugal" at the sometime unfortunate Gymnase.

Here he had the good luck to leave his principal parts in such hands as Marie Magnier and Noblet, and as English playgoers know what these two delightful actresses can do, having applauded them to the echo in this very theatre in Soho, the fact that M. Valabrugue's comedy was in every sense an artistic triumph goes without saying. Had the English version of "Le Bonheur Conjugal" been given at the Criterion Theatre, with stage management by Charles Wyndham, the result would have been even better than it was the other night, for the adapter found himself handicapped by a company who were, with one exception, just a little difficult to reconcile with this particular piece. Mr. W. Edouin and his clever wife have educated up their patrons to burlesque and farce, and so the greater portion of the brightness and smartness of the Parisian comedy has been sacrificed to suit their requirements. Notwithstanding all this, however, Mr. Warren has succeeded admirably. It is not his fault that he has had to cut away some wit to give us pantomime, or that the true essence of comedy is not as often to the fore as it should be; and we repeat, written to suit the Criterion or some such theatre and company, his success would have been almost doubled. After all, the plot is simple. A retired hatter, Caleb Chubb, is seen in his comfortable and luxurious home, his children have married well, and the last remaining one, Dorothy, is just affianced to a young surgeon who loves her dearly, and who is coming to make his first call. Mrs. Chubb has stricter ideas of etiquette and aspires than her husband, and love's young dream, in her opinion, must be accompanied by judicious hints from a text book, a guide to courtship and marriage. Therefore, when the *fiancé* comes, his pretty Dorothy mystifies him and aggravates him by carrying out her mother's commands, and he finds a kiss very difficult to obtain, until he artfully suggests aiding her in mastering the aforesaid book, and takes at once a good opportunity and an embrace. But all of a sudden the brightness of the horizon is overcast. Agatha, the eldest daughter, arrives in floods of tears. She has quarrelled with her husband, Valentine Honeysett, and returns to her father's house with a quantity of luggage, a maid, and a pug-dog, and no sooner has she wept out her story of her husband's jealousy and cruelty in flinging her last new ball dress out of the window than Grace, the second daughter, arrives, escorted by her aggrieved spouse, Noel Goldring. The latter at once plunges dismay into the hearts of the good old hatter and his wife, by denouncing Grace as an unsympathetic, discontented creature, and, moreover, a woman who fails so far in her duty as to persistently give him cold meat for dinner. This is a remarkably comic scene, excellently played, more especially by Mr. Lytton Sothorn, and from then up till the fall of the curtain, which reveals Caleb with all his daughters on his hands again (for, taking warning from her sisters, Dorothy ruthlessly breaks off her engagement), the laughter and applause is loud and strong. The second act is still more amusing. The miserable bachelor husbands try to put the best face on the

matter, and repeatedly encourage one another to be jolly, which happy condition of mind is not to be had for the asking, however, and when it appears that both their wives are thoroughly enjoying themselves matters become worse. Old Chubb and Mrs. Chubb try to act as peace-makers, and retire to an alcove as Agatha and Grace arrive, thinking, poor souls, that the four young people are coming to an amicable conclusion. Instead of this, however, the two couples are determined to persevere in their anger and sit down coolly to prepare and take notes for their immediate divorce. Nothing funnier than this particular scene has ever been given in a farcical comedy. All Caleb Chubb's wisdom is of no avail, and everything is at sixes and sevens until Noel Goldring hits on the happy idea of jealousy. The transparent folly of Agatha and Valentine's quarrel makes Grace's and his own equally absurd. Things must be altered, and he has a happy idea. He shows Agatha a letter purporting to be from some countess to Valentine, in reality, one from the amorous bride, Matilda Beeby (Agatha's maid) to her husband, Daniel (Valentine's servant); and, of course, Agatha swallows the bait; then to send a fictitious one to Valentine with the same purport is very easy, and, as Grace overhears him dictating this epistle, he fires the train on his own behalf, too. By an ingenious series of events, every character on the stage gets implicated in these letters, and one and all decide, as the curtain falls, to meet at the same address used by the supposed Count and Countess Semolina, 10, Titmouse Street, Mayfair. The last act shows us this apartment, and then the fun is fast and furious, in the midst of which the cute housemaid, who has been coached by Noel, manages to keep her wits—a rather difficult matter, by the way—and fill her purse at the same time. Meetings and recriminations are in full swing, when the door is thrown open, the Count and Countess of Semolina are announced, and Noël Goldring walks in with his sister-in-law, Dorothy Chubb. After this the curtain should fall as smartly as possible, and Mr. Warren will be wise if he prunes the talky finale and ends the act in the same brisk manner as it has been played throughout. In mentioning the Royalty company just now we said with one exception they were slightly difficult to associate with this kind of piece. That exception was Mr. Lytton Sothern. With all the traditions of his father and the Criterion, as an assistance to his own talent, this young actor was easy, really funny, and word perfect (in which last good point he was very nearly alone); and, indeed, if Mr. Charles Wyndham is about to vacate the realms of effervescent comedy for the paths of romance, and possibly metaphysics, we know no one on whose shoulder his mantle may more worthily rest than that of Mr. Lytton Sothern. Mr. Morton Selton has not failed to profit by the brightness, the spontaneity, and the earnestness which characterises Mr. Sothern's work, for he is seen to advantage as Valentine Honeysett, the handsome young stockbroker, with a drawl and a jealous adoration of his

tantalising and pretty wife, Agatha, who, in the hands of Miss Alice Atherton, was charmingly acted. It was only natural that Miss Atherton should seem just a little strange in her new surroundings ; we have got so accustomed to seeing her laugh and dance, and listen eagerly for her sweet voice, that we can't quite reconcile ourselves to a whole evening spent without one or the other ; but, no doubt, that will change, and Miss Atherton will prove the wisdom of her choice in electing to forego burlesque for a time and appear in comedy. Miss Olga Brandon, with a most beautiful face, ably seconds Mr. Sothern as his aggravating wife and disappointing housekeeper, and Miss Eva Wilson proves that her early training at the Princess's Theatre has not been in vain. To Miss Wilson much praise is due, and some commiseration for the modest way in which she uttered the one or two risky lines that fell to her part. As Caleb Chubb, the retired hatter, Mr. Willie Edouin gave us a clever character sketch ; we say sketch advisedly, for Mr. Edouin, probably from a press of managerial anxiety, had evidently not allowed himself time to develop the excellent touches which one saw here and there. The hatter is about equivalent to the butterman in " Our Boys," with almost the same opportunities for a glimpse of pathos in the midst of all the comedy. It is a pity Mr. Edouin should have failed to reveal this pathetic side, for it would have given just that little bit of human nature which the part requires. Moreover, the actor failed to do full justice to himself in neglecting this effective and necessary light and shade, for Mr. Edouin possesses the power to move us to tears as well as laughter, as his performance of the old clown in the piece preceding " Modern Wives " proves beyond controversy. However, so clever an artist is sure to work up the suggestions before alluded to, and give us a performance that will be humorous, touching, delightful, and finished. The minor parts are moderately well-filled. A few more rehearsals for general smoothness and finish would be desirable, especially in the first and third acts ; the second, as it stands, with its amusing amateur divorce scene, and its final contretemps, was the most successful. With the judicious use of the scissors, no doubt Mr. Warren will improve on his work, especially at the very end ; but, in any case, the good fortune of the piece is assured, and a run probably twice as long as the original one in Paris may be expected. The staging throughout was excellent, the mounting of the second act being exceptionally costly and pretty.

E. R

Our Omnibus=Box.

In the "Pall Mall Gazette" of January 14, 1887, was printed the following communication from Mr. William Archer, the well-known dramatic critic and essayist. The letter, written in the direct interest of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, author of "The Noble Vagabond," was, subsequently, with the evident consent of that gentleman, and as the deliberate act of the management of the Princess's Theatre, who had previously issued invitations courting fair criticism in the usual manner, published as a public advertisement in several newspapers of the widest circulation.

"THE NOBLE VAGABOND."

Mr. William Archer writes to us as follows in defence of Mr. Jones's new play at the Princess's Theatre:—

There have been rumours in various quarters—rumours which I am glad to see contradicted in the "Daily News"—that Mr. H. A. Jones's play, "The Noble Vagabond," had proved a failure, and was to be withdrawn. I have recorded elsewhere my high opinion of the play, in which I was glad to find myself in agreement with your dramatic critic, and, I think, with most of the press. One influential paper, however (specially influential with the very public to which melodrama appeals), dissented vehemently. The critic of the "Daily Telegraph" took Mr. Jones sternly to task, yet rather in sorrow than in anger. "Hitherto," he wrote, "his gentle influence, his refined taste, and his graceful fancy have led popular melodrama into paths of pleasantness and peace. But suddenly he has cast imagination to the winds, has uprooted romance, has made havoc of poesy." In the new play the critic could discern nothing but "storm and stress," crime, horror, and above all, noise. Now, Mr. Jones has hitherto been responsible, in part at least, for two popular melodramas—"The Lord Harry" we may disregard, for it was *not* popular. It must therefore be in "The Silver King" and "Hoodman Blind" that he has led melodrama "into paths of pleasantness and peace." "The Silver King" began with drunkenness and robbery; it went on to midnight burglary and murder; then there came an appalling railway catastrophe (behind the scenes, it is true); and thenceforward the play was one tissue of crime and violence. "Hoodman Blind" opened with murder and robbery; proceeded to personation and murderous assault; varied matters with a ghastly "dance of death" in a "boozing ken"; passed on to suicide; and ended with more robbery, an attempted murder, and an almost consummated lynching. Surely this critic has odd ideas of pleasantness, and finds "peace, peace, where there is no peace." As a matter of fact there is far less crime and violence in "The Noble Vagabond" than in its predecessors from the same pen; but, after all, crime is the melodramatist's stock-in-trade, and a pleasant and peaceful melodrama is a contradiction in terms. As for the noise on which the critic dwells in eight different places, the Fair

scene was undoubtedly a little too strident on the first night, but otherwise I was quite unaware of any unusual amount of "clamour and shouting." In short, I cannot help thinking that the critic of the "Daily Telegraph" has contrasted "The Noble Vagabond," not with any existing melodrama by Mr. Jones or anyone else, but with an ideal melodrama of his own, in which all is "romance and poesy," and no one shouts above a whisper.

Not only does "The Noble Vagabond" lack "pleasantness and peace" in the eyes of our critic; it is also "unskillfully manipulated," "complicated with unnecessary matter," flagging in interest, and apt to dwindle away into "small explosions of fury," "chance fights" and needless "cross-purposes." Astonished to find myself so diametrically at variance with so experienced a critic, I determined to revise my first-night impressions of the play, and to see it from the true point of melodrama—namely, the pit. I went to the pit last Saturday night, and was confirmed by my observation both of play and audience, in the opinion that, as regards construction, "The Noble Vagabond" is by far the best play of its kind we have seen for years. It does not start like "The Silver King" from a brilliant melodramatic inspiration; its materials are hackneyed and its characters threadbare; but in point of sustained adroitness and finish of construction I maintain it to be superior to all recent melodramas, "The Silver King" not excepted. The plot is ingeniously involved, and deftly, sequently, and effectively evolved. The interest so far from "fading away"—I speak on behalf of Saturday night's pit—is skillfully sustained up to the very end of the last scene but one, or, in other words, to within three minutes of the fall of the curtain. I could discover no unnecessary "cross-purposes" or motiveless "explosions of fury." If the play is anywhere "complicated with unnecessary matter" it is in the humorous interludes, whose scantiness our critic expressly deploras. In my judgment, which I think coincided with that of my fellow-pittites, the scene in which Dick Vimpany hounds on the crowd against his own familiar friend, and so aids in defeating the very scheme he has been striving tooth and nail to forward, forms one of the most effectively worked-up situations on the modern stage. I have said elsewhere, and I stand to the opinion, that the play is one which, in point of construction, D'Ennery would not disown. There are faults of representation not a few, the most salient being Mr. Julian Cross's extreme slowness in the first act, which Mr. Warner imitates and even exaggerates at the close of the second. But it is not the critic's business to distinguish between the author's errors and the actor's shortcomings?

In pleading the cause of "The Noble Vagabond," I am running counter to a pet theory of my own, which I have lately propounded at some length, and with much labour. It is that the public is ceasing to care for the "well-made play," and is more and more attracted by the faithful reproduction of closely-observed episodes from real life. "The Noble Vagabond" is in my eyes a "well-made play," and nothing more. The plot and characters are conventional; the humour, though sufficiently amusing, is of the good old Dickens brand. If the play were to fail, as I don't think it will, its failure would be the best possible argument in favour of my pet theory. I hope it will succeed, not because I, personally, have any preference for the mere "well-made play," but because I see so many ill-made plays, as conventional as "The Noble Vagabond" and not one tithe as well written or constructed, running their hundreds of nights and drawing their thousands of pounds. The success of — and — and — (need I fill in the "little list?") has knocked a far larger hole in my pet theory than the failure of "The Noble Vagabond" could possibly repair.

My friend, Mr. William Archer, by the publication of this letter—the appeal of a dramatic critic against the conscientious opinion of a brother dramatic critic, the public protest of one writer against the deliberate views of another—has started a new and, what may fairly be called, a dangerous precedent. It was not unnatural that such a letter, written in the deliberate interest of journalistic and literary polemics; a letter that was bound to create controversy, to be misunderstood, to cause scandal and to give offence, should appear in a journal that, whilst vigorously protesting against what it facetiously calls “log-rolling,” has started the far more disagreeable process of “dog-eating.” I candidly own that in the course of long and anxious years I have rolled many a heavy log for my friends, and I am proud to think that I should never have been where I am, should never have been able to stem the tide of bitterness, misrepresentation, and jealousy that stand sentinels at the dark door of public life, had not my friends at the outset, as now, have rolled for me log after log to help me to rear a hut to shelter me from the storms that break over every one of us at some time or other. The term “log-rolling,” as I understand it, is metaphorical for an act of good-fellowship, of kindly assistance, and mutual help. In the old days when settlers went out to the far West, and were away from the confines of civilisation, they depended on their friends, their companions, their neighbours, or their “pals” for those little acts of kindly consideration and courtesy that have hitherto not wholly been found wanting in the human family. They could not build their houses or their shanties without “a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,” and so they considerately and loyally helped one another at the outset of their difficult career. It is this system of “log-rolling,” this mutual interchange of courtesies, this kindly sympathy and assistance in the face of difficulty that we are asked to put down for conscience sake by the modern school of journalists. It is considered discreditable, unfair, and without the pale of honour for men of the same craft to stick together!

Instead of that, instead of this dishonourable and degrading “log-rolling,” we are asked to assist at the cannibalistic banquet of “dog-eating.” I was always taught that it was disgusting for “dog to eat dog,” and I think I shall never thoroughly enjoy such a repast. We saw a brilliant example of “dog-eating” the other day, a contrast to “log-rolling,” in the celebrated Gosse and Churton-Collins controversy. It was not an edifying or encouraging spectacle to journalists and men of letters brought up in an older school. Two men, two friends, two candidates for the same professorship, two rivals, two minds trained in the same school of thought, two competitors in the same race for fame, suddenly pitted against one another, snarling at each other, picking holes in one another’s raiment; and, instead of the honourable rival pulling off his coat like a man, and endeavouring to roll his neighbour’s log, what do we find him doing?

Why, hanging on to his rival's heels and desperately struggling to drag him down from the rung of the ladder to which he has climbed.

When Mr. William Archer has lived in the world as long as I have, and has reviewed plays as long as I have, and knows to the full the thanklessness of the task of dramatic criticism, and the utter impossibility of pleasing anyone but the proprietors for whom you work, and the great anonymous public whom you serve, he will possibly relish a little mild "log-rolling" for the sake of his craft, instead of an occasional snap at his neighbour's tail. He must know by this time, and with his already acquired experience, that it is scarcely possible to write a word, good, bad, or indifferent, about a play or actor that does not bring with it its accusation of "motive." "What have I done to So-and-so that he should consider my play bad or my acting indifferent?" This is the eternal wail of the criticised, who will swallow quarts of praise at a gulp, but instantly reject a spoonful of blame.

We who go serenely on our way, indifferent to misrepresentation, or cowardly attack so often repeated that it sickens the very public it is supposed to interest, or anonymous slander—all the inheritance, in fact, of a career devoted to a branch of art that, with all its greatness, is often desperately small and inconceivably mean. We who have to discuss the life-work of men and women who, apart from the nobility of their aspirations, cultivate sensitiveness and harbour slight to a degree unparalleled in any other calling. We who know the difficulties and disappointments attendant on our duties, and, from experience, are conscious of the misrepresentation that must follow our most conscientious labour, do not need any enemies in our own camp. We have enough to put up with from without. Let us try to stick together, not as a body or a clique, or as a fantastic or fanciful mutual admiration society, but as men honestly fond of the art we have studied, and as bravely determined to do our level best for the English stage and its professors. We have to meet together, and sit together, and discuss together, night after night, morning after morning, from one year's end to the other, let us give one another credit for honesty, when we know that we are honest, and bear with one another's weakness and failings, going out of our way to believe rather in good faith, than in meanness and want of charity. There is mud enough thrown at the stage, as it stands, by the public outside, and by the profession that continually airs its own grievances to the detriment of the artistic community, without dramatic critics tilting at one another and striving to belittle one another after the fashion of Gosse and Co., making as an excuse our horror of "log-rolling" and mutual admiration. For nearly seven-and-twenty years I have been admitted to my seat on the critical benches of our London theatres, and when a mere lad I received the greatest kindness, consideration, and help from the giants of other days. Co-operation and assistance were our watchwords then, and I

trust it will continue to be so now. As I was helped when I came to the theatres a comparative ignoramus, I have tried to help those who followed me, and hitherto, I am proud to confess, there has been no body of men connected with journalism who have been more loyal or tolerant to one another, more reticent in the cheap task of harping on mutual failings, or less ready to take offence, than the body of dramatic critics in London and elsewhere.

I can hear Mr. Archer say that nothing was further from his intention than to stir up a fruitless controversy, or to injure a brother journalist. I know it; I believe it; I have been assured of it. Unfortunately, one of the sentences in his letter has been generally misunderstood, and, though he was most anxious and ready to repair the misunderstanding, and offered to do so in generous terms, the mischief was already done. The paper that protests against "log-rolling," and favours the modern process of "dog-eating," was only too ready and eager to publish every word that could be said or written about the subject of Mr. Archer's innocent indictment. Scarcely was Mr. Archer's letter dry before everyone who had a fancied grievance against a public writer immediately rushed into print. The generous public held their tongues; only the small-minded began yelping and snarling. Not a word appeared in discredit of the new fashion of "dog-eating," but every letter that could favour the modern journalistic process was greedily printed. Following Mr. Archer's protest came the undermentioned feeble support to his gratuitous criticism:—

"THE NOBLE VAGABOND."

We have received the following, among other letters, in the same sense *apropos* of Mr. Archer's letter on Mr. Jones's melodrama now being played at the Princess's Theatre:—

Mr. J. Pullen writes:—"I have read with very great interest Mr. William Archer's letter upon 'The Noble Vagabond' in the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' As a constant first-nighter for the last twenty-five years I witnessed the first production of 'The Noble Vagabond' at the Princess's. In common with all those around me I thoroughly enjoyed the play and went away from the theatre with the impression that it was equal to any melodrama that had been produced for many years, and that a very great success had been obtained. What was my surprise in turning to the 'Daily Telegraph' the next morning to find the play roundly abused in 'good set terms.' I was quite at a loss to understand the criticism, and on the ground of fair play I am very glad to find that the matter has been thus taken up by Mr. Archer. I have no doubt his opinion will be endorsed by many others who were present."

Mr. F. R. Thompsett writes from Maidstone:—"As a theatre-goer residing in the country, and dependent upon the London press for guidance as to what are the best plays to see, I have hitherto been deterred from visiting the Princess's to see 'The Noble Vagabond,' owing to the criticism which appeared in the 'Daily Telegraph,' but being persuaded last night to see the piece, I was agreeably surprised to find that in the place of the blood-and-thunder and transpontine melodrama, as depicted in the 'Daily Telegraph's' criticism, I found a play most ingeniously constructed, and, as a melodrama, comparing most favourably

with such as "The Silver King," The Harbour Lights,' and other successful plays. The criticism of the largely-read 'Daily Telegraph' may possibly prevent many a supporter of the drama from seeing this fine play; but I protest that such criticisms are unjust."

I do not suppose that any human being cares one brass farthing for the opinion of Mr. J. Pullen, whoever he may be; or for the disappointment of Mr. Thompsett, of Maidstone! When we go to the play to state our opinion on it, we give the result of our own judgment and experience, and all the Pullens and Thompsetts in the world may take it or leave it just as they think fit. Mr. Pullen, the twenty-five year first-nighter, is at a "loss to understand the criticism," merely because he does not agree with it! He does not consider it "fair play" to write anything that he does not happen to approve of. There is no arguing with such a man. He had better write his own criticisms, and revel in their *fairness* the next morning. Mr. Thompsett, of Maidstone, protests that such criticisms are *unjust*! Why? Merely because he does not agree with the isolated opinion of one who does not write for Thompsett, of Maidstone, whose views on the contemporary drama may or may not be worthless, but for tens of thousands who do not judge a writer by one isolated opinion, but for his general published work. But there are disputants of a lower grade who have not the pluck of Pullen and Thompsett. These, fired by Mr. Archer's critical protest, send filthy and scurrilous postcards to one's club and private address, signed by the threatening words, "First Night Pittite." I don't believe that a scoundrel who could pen an anonymous postcard such as I have received would be admitted into the fraternity of "first night pittites." He must be one of the cowards who come to the play occasionally to hiss defenceless women, one of the very men whom pittites most loath and detest, a nuisance to all serious playgoers, who ought to be kicked out neck and crop when this mean rascal comes to offend an audience, to insult artists, and to stop a play. No one is more disgusted with the anonymous attacks, that have been the outcome of the protest, than Mr. Archer himself. He did not see that the mean and the ignoble seize upon every coign of vantage from which to pelt filth at their enemies. It is earnestly to be hoped that this precedent will not be generally followed, and that authors with a grievance will not skulk behind the shield of any powerful or influential writer, who can battle bravely for them with clever and caustic pens. If Mr. Henry A. Jones, who writes plays, and causes critics to be invited to see them and record their opinions, cannot take the rough with the smooth, let him at least fight his own battles. It is the author of "The Noble Vagabond" who has alone come out of the controversy smirched with the ignoble dust of the fray. No one can blame Mr. William Archer for his loyal defence of a dramatist who is not mealy-mouthed when he discusses the degradation of the drama in quarterly reviews and at public dinners, but who fights by deputy

when it suits him to cavil at an opinion deliberately asked for and candidly given. No one can blame a theatrical management for making the best use of an artfully-designed advertisement. But the author of "The Silver King" might have remembered those who helped him to roll *his* first log, and should have been one of the last men to make cheap capital out of Mr. Archer's impulsive kindness. Mr. Jones, the dramatist, can very well write his own advertisements, and does not require the assistance of Mr. William Archer.

Although considerably more than a century has elapsed since Oliver Goldsmith's second dramatic work—which he styled, in the dedication to Dr. Johnson, "this slight performance"—was produced, the author's wit has lost none of its savour, and the admirable construction of the play delights audiences now as greatly as it did in Goldsmith's lifetime. That the popularity of the work has in no way diminished was evidenced by the hearty reception accorded to the revival of the comedy on January 3, last, at the Strand Theatre, by Mr. Edward Compton, who deserves the thanks of all playgoers for furnishing them with an opportunity, such as is, unfortunately, all too rare of witnessing a careful and adequate performance of the play. The revival is particularly interesting from the fact that this is Mr. Compton's first appearance as Young Marlow, a part admirably suited to his manner, and which he plays with the easy grace and refinement that distinguish him. The lively phase of the character might with advantage be more strongly emphasised, but this is the only shortcoming in a very intelligent performance. The Tony Lumpkin is Mr. Sydney Valentine, a young comedian of very considerable talent. The wild horseplay that is too often indulged in by representatives of this part is conspicuous by its absence, and in its place we have a fresh, unconventional, and exceedingly humorous reading of the character—one that is well thought out and consistently carried through. Miss Virginia Bateman (Mrs. Compton) reappears, and plays Miss Hardcastle with much gaiety and archness. That ripe actor, Mr. Lewis Ball, brings his long experience and sound training to bear upon the part of Hardcastle with the happiest results. He is ably seconded by Miss Elinor Aickin, who is an effective Mrs. Hardcastle. Mr. C. Dodsworth as Diggory was very amusing. Mr. C. Blakiston is a careful and dignified Sir Charles Marlow, and Mr. Paxton is good in the small part of Stingo. As is usually the case, the Hastings and Miss Neville are somewhat colourless. The dresses are handsome and the scenery exceedingly good; exception may be taken, however, to the richness of the hall in Hardcastle's house—it is far too gorgeous for anyone to mistake it for a room in an inn.

Mr. W. J. Lawrence writes :—As a statement made in my article of last month is, unfortunately, not calculated to uphold the reputation for general accuracy which "THE THEATRE" has hitherto enjoyed, I hasten to repair an error occasioned by a plethora, and not a paucity,

of thought. Misled by Emmett's reference to his old rival, Rich, in his oft-quoted epilogue, and finding that "Harlequin's Invasion" was in the bills at Drury Lane, immediately after the harlequin's death, I hastily refused to accept the date which the occasionally-inaccurate Baker assigned for the original production of the pantomime in his "Biography of the Drama," and so fixed it at 1761. Having had occasion more recently to make a vigorous research through the files of sundry old newspapers—but more particularly "The Whitehall Evening Post" and "General Evening Post"—I found that the *premiere* took place on Wednesday, December 26, 1759, and that the pantomime was performed intermittently to May 1760. During the following season at Drury Lane it was revived on Saturday, Oct. 11 for about twelve nights, and again at the latter end of November, immediately before the death of Rich on the 26th of that month. Garrick's epilogue must, therefore, have been purely an afterthought, evoked by this circumstance. "Harlequin's Invasion" reappeared once more in the Drury Lane bill on Thursday, April 22, 1762; and one other important revival, not previously referred to, is that of Dec. 26, 1786, which Mr. Augustus Harris has commemorated in his facsimile playbill. This abnormal reproduction of the old pantomimes appears rather whimsical to latter-day minds; but, the fact is, a century ago these entertainments were not exclusively holiday attractions, and occupied a similar position in the bill to that of the farce of later days. It is worthy of note also that the Haymarket scenic artist was not Ned Rooker, but Michael Angelo of that ilk—the clever son of an equally clever father.

Half the battle is won if an elocutionist can engage the sympathies of his audience as well as their mere attention, and Mr. J. Howe-Clifford, from his very *bonhomie* and earnestness, completely possesses this faculty. On Tuesday January 18, Ladbroke Hall showed no vacant seats when Mr. Clifford gave his recital, and the warm greeting he received on his appearance vied with the applause bestowed on him during the evening, and there is no doubt in his lighter vein the elocutionist was excellent; his sly, good humour was apparent in the way he gave "The Hat," a trifle taken from the French, and, in an American sketch, "At the Opera," quaintly and brightly delivered. In "The Death of the Old Squire," describing the last moments of one devoted to fox-hunting, and in Campbell Rae-Brown's "Kissing Cup's Race," Mr. Clifford gradually and skillfully worked up his powers, and in each case so roused the interest of his audience as to be enthusiastically applauded at the close. From the manner in which Cassaway's "The Pride of Battery B" was given, Mr. Clifford, I should say, was fond of children, and studied the artless, yet earnest, manner in which a little one will discharge a self-imposed task; and that his manner can be alternately chivalric and roguish was proved in Whittier's "King Volmer and Elsie," the true-heartedness and astuteness of the maid being particularly well sus-

tained. The two least successful numbers in the programme were Eliza Cook's "Sacrilegious Gamesters," which was hardly intense and powerful enough in delivery, and Longfellow's "The Legend Beautiful," a poem exquisite to read, but one to which even the most perfect of elocutionists can scarce do justice in public. May I add that a little more action in the course of delivery would materially strengthen Mr. Clifford's recitals, and that Mr. Rowland Briant, A.R.A.M., deserves a word of thanks for his brilliant pianoforte playing.

The members of the Philothespian Club gave their eighty-ninth performance (eleventh season) at St. George's Hall, Langham-place, on Saturday, January 22nd. The play chosen was Bronson Howard's clever and delightful drama "The Old Love and the New," and from the attentive and eagerly appreciative manner in which the piece was received the choice was evidently a good one. Amateurs are, as a rule, more at home in a comedy than a drama; it requires more art to touch the hearts than to provoke laughter, and in a play of this calibre, where emotions must be expressed by the face and not by melodramatic gesticulation, the difficulties with which they have to contend are very numerous. Two parts stood out above the rest in the men's performance—the John Stratton of Mr. H. A. Stacke, and the George Washington Phipps of Mr. A. H. Beard, and of those two Mr. Stacke was incomparably the best. Despite the fact that so distinguished an actor as Mr. Coghlan first created this part in London, we do not think the amateur need fear the reproach of presumption for having selected to essay it too, for Mr. Stacke was admirable throughout, his one and only blemish being a rather curious pronunciation which sometimes marred his effects, otherwise his delineation of the generous, tender-hearted husband was one that no actor need have despised. His emotion was not strained or overdrawn, but genuine, and therefore most excellent; and his love for the young girl who is the very sun of life to him was gently, but delightfully, expressed. Mr. Beard as the American was distinctly good, his accent, perhaps, a trifle too marked, but well sustained; in which point it would have been better if Mr. Maurice Stacke as Montvilliaic, the art critic, and Mr. Herbert Linford as the Count de Carofac had followed their comrade's example. Both these gentlemen spoke in broken English, but the result was not satisfactory. They played moderately well, as did also Mr. W. M. Waterton as Mr. Westbrook, the selfish father of Lilian, and Mr. D. Beveridge as Harold Kenyon. The latter would have been much better had he been more at his ease, but his attitudes, especially in the short scene with Lilian, were stiff and awkward. In the duet, capitally given, by the way, both Mr. Beveridge and Mr. Linwood were seen to greater advantage. Mr. J. O. Grout in the small part of Mr. Babbage deserves a good word, and the rest were adequate. Of the ladies Miss Gertrude Warden comes first, but she is no amateur, having worked hard in the profession for the last three or four years, and having, therefore, some experience. Judging by Miss Warden's performance of Lilian Westbrook, it seems to us that

she has the makings of a really strong, if not a positive tragic, actress. She is no *ingénue*. She does not look a young girl, though paradoxically she does not certainly look an old one. What we mean exactly by this is that Miss Warden's face is too serious for a bright, thoughtless maiden, who is as gay as the proverbial lark, and who has not a trouble in life. Now this is undoubtedly just what Lilian Westbrook should be in the first act, for beyond a temporary quarrel with Harold Kenyon she has not a shadow to darken her path, and we do not intend to find fault with Miss Warden when we say that she cannot give us this or anything like it. Her face is extremely pretty, young, sympathetic, but it has an expression of sadness that does not harmonise with the girlish character. In the second part of the story Miss Warden was most excellent, and she gave a glimpse here and there of the strong power and passionate force which has led us to prophesy that she has not yet been seen in her proper line. In her handsome dinner dress of cardinal plush the young actress made an imposing picture, and in the scene between John Stratton and his wife after the duel she won the entire sympathies of the audience, and provoked a storm of applause. Still, Miss Warden will be advised to consider her position carefully, for, despite her success, such a part as Lilian is not altogether suited to her. She wants something bolder, something even tragic; her face would lend itself to classic draperies, and her voice, which is singularly sweet and refined, would be heard to better advantage in the rhythm of blank verse than in the colloquialisms of a modern society drama. In any case, with her face, her voice, and last, but not least, her brains, Miss Gertrude Warden is bound to rise to something higher than playing as we saw her on Saturday evening. Miss Maud Strudwick as Mrs. Brown was amusing, but too pronounced; besides, she pranced and flounced too much, and gave a very bad imitation of Miss Carlotta Leclercq's peculiar method of speaking, but to do her justice Miss Strudwick seemed to establish herself a favourite with the audience. The pretty part of Aunt Fanny was lost in the hands of Mr. Reginald Sharpe. Lisette was well played by Miss Edith Lomax; and Natalie, the child, was entrusted to a little girl with a natural aptitude for acting, but a total disregard to the necessity of an aspirate, and having about the most fully developed cockney accent it has been our lot to hear. During the evening a selection of music was given by a band of the Amateur Orchestral Society, under the direction of Mr. A. Deane.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from December 25, 1886, to January 25, 1887 :—
(Revivals are marked thus.)*

LONDON :

- Jan. 17 "Hard Hit," play in four acts, by Henry Arthur Jones. Haymarket Theatre.
 „ 18 "The Lodgers," farce in three acts, founded on a French vaudeville, by Brandon Thomas and Maurice de Verney. Globe Theatre.
 „ 18 "Dux Redux," poetical play in three acts, by James Rhoades. Novelty Theatre (produced by amateurs).
 „ 18 "A Sixpenny Wire," farce by Campbell Rae-Brown. St. Andrew's Hall, West Kensington (produced by amateurs).
 „ 20 "Modern Wives," farcical play in three acts, adapted by Ernest Warren from "Le Bonheur Conjugal." Royalty Theatre.
 „ 22 "Ruddygore; or, the Witch's Curse," supernatural opera in two acts, by W. S. Gilbert; music composed by Arthur Sullivan. Savoy Theatre.

PROVINCES :

- Dec. 27 "The Captain," farcical play in three acts, by W. F. Field. Town Hall, Maidenhead.
 „ 30 "Pepita," comic opera in three acts, adapted from the French of Chivot and Duru, by "Mostyn Tedde;" composed by Charles Lecocq. Court Theatre, Liverpool.
 Jan. 1 "A Glimpse of Paradise," farcical play in three acts, by Joseph Dilley. Lyric Hall, Ealing.
 „ 5 "On Tour; or, a Trip to Heidelberg," musical comedy, by W. F. Field. Drill Hall, Ealing.
 „ 11 "The World against Her," drama by Frank Harvey. Theatre Royal, Preston.
 „ 12 "The Policeman," farcical play in three acts, by Walter Helmore and Eden Phillpotts. Lyric Hall, Ealing.
 „ 18 "On His Oath," drama in prologue and four acts, by Charles W. Aldin. Theatre Royal, Scarborough.
 „ 24 "Myfisto," extravaganza, by Vere Montague and Frank St. Clare. Theatre Royal, Colchester.

PARIS :

- Dec. 21 "Le Crocodile," comedy in five acts and nine tableaux, by Victorien Sardou. Porte St. Martin.
 „ 21 "Chez la Champmesle," à *propos* in one act, in verse, by M^{me}. Galaron and M. Ernest de Calonne. Odéon.
 „ 22 "Eden-revue," pot-pourri ballet in four acts. Eden.
 „ 23 "Paris en général," *revue* in four acts and ten tableaux, by MM. Montréal, Blondeau, and Grisier. Folies Dramatiques.
 „ 24* "Le Maître de Forges," drama in four acts, by M. Georges Ohnet. Gymnase.
 „ 28* "Les Jocrisses de l'Amour," comedy in three acts, by MM. Théodore Barrière and Lambert Thiboust. Cluny.
 „ 28* "L'homme n'est pas parfait," comedy in one act, by M. Lambert Thiboust. Cluny.

- Dec. 31* "Le Lion Amoureux," drama in five acts, by M. François Ponsard. Odéon.
- Jan. 4 "Les Grenadiers de Mont Cornette," opera bouffe in three acts, libretto by MM. Daunis, Delormel, and Edouard Philippe, music by M. Charles Lecocq. Bouffes Parisiens.
- " 8* "Le Tour du Cadran," vaudeville in five acts and six tableaux, by MM. Hector Cremieux and Henri Bocage, music by M. Cœdès. Variétés.
- " 14 "Vidocq ou la police en 18. . .," comedy in five acts and seven tableaux, by MM. A. Jaime and Georges Richard. Chateau d'Eau.
- " ,* "Les locataires de M. Blondeau," vaudeville in five acts, by M. Henri Chivot. Palais Royal.
- " 15 "La Comtesse Sarah," drama in five acts, by M. Georges Ohnet. Gymnase.
- " , "Protestation," an *à propos* in verse, by M. Emile Moreau. Théâtre Français.
- " , "Molière chez Conti," comedy in one act, in verse, by M. Alfred Copin. Odéon.
- " 17 "Francillon," comedy in three acts, in verse, by Alexandre Dumas. Théâtre Français.
- " 20* "Josephine vendue par ses sœurs," comic opera in three acts, words by MM. Paul Ferrier and Fabrice Carré, music by M. Victor Roger. Bouffes Parisiens.
- " 21 "Bandit," pantomime in three tableaux. Cirque d'hiver.
- " 25 "L'Amour mouillé," comic opera in three acts, by MM. Jules Prével and Armand Liorat, music by M. Louis Varney. Nouveautés.





"A generous friendship no cold medium knows"

POPE.

MISS AMY ROSELLE

THE THEATRE.



The Drury Lane Managers.

FROM KILLIGREW TO AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

PART III.

TWO of this company, Powell and Wilks, were in perpetual rivalry, and jealous of each other. Powell was at last driven out, and the director no doubt fancied, like many others in similar cases, that this would give him the "whip hand," as it is called, of the situation. A *rusé* manager, however, will always welcome the opposing jealousies of rivals, which he can work on to his own profit. He is thus in the position of one of his own carpenters, who is at one of the "drums" or winches, controlling the rise or fall of a stage, which is balanced by a "counterpoise." When Powell was gone, he found that there was no dealing with the airs and pretensions of Wilks, who considered himself indispensable, and succeeded in obtaining additional salary, and became, in Cibber's quaint phrase, "first *bustle master* of the company." Nowadays no actor can be "first *bustle master*," for the reason that with such power he would become a manager himself. In his growing difficulties Rich, though "a close, subtle man," had to ask advice from one of his inferior players.

Powell, he said, was a better actor than Wilkes when he minded his business; that is to say, *when he was, what he seldom was, sober*. But Powell, it seems, had a still greater merit for him, which was (as he observed) that when affairs were in his hands *he had kept the actors quiet, without one day's pay, for six weeks together*, and it was not everybody could do that; "for you see," said he, "Wilks will never be easy unless I give him his whole pay when others have it not, and what an injustice would that be to the rest

were I to comply with him! How do I know, but then they may be all in a mutiny?" By this specimen of our debate it may be judged under how particular and merry a government the theatre then laboured. "This mode of governing a theatre here revealed, with the manager's peculiar mode of estimating the value of an actor to him, is highly entertaining.

It will be seen at once to what a painful and degraded position the company were reduced by this chicane; and, indeed, Rich seems to suggest one of those thieving *entrepreneurs* of our day who take a company "round the country," paying them half salaries or mere promises, and "bolting" with the receipts of the first full house. Neither could the "Adventurers" or other patentees obtain any settlement from him, and for years he set them at defiance, meeting them in courts of law, and using all his professional skill to baffle them. "He had led them a chase in Chancery several years, and when they had driven him into a contempt of that court, he conjured up a spirit in the shape of six and eightpence a-day, that constantly struck the tipstaff blind whenever he came near him. He knew the intrinsic value of delay, and was resolved to stick to it, as the surest way to give the plaintiffs enough of it. And by this expedient our good master had long walked about, at his leisure, cool and contented as a fox, when the hounds were drawn off and gone home from him." At last, quite disgusted, nearly all his good players deserted him, and set up in the Haymarket at Vanbrugh's brand new opera house. Cibber paid him a visit in this desolation. His offers of condolence and assistance were received in an odd fashion. "Don't you trouble yourself," said the manager; "come along, and I'll show you." He then led me about all the by-places in the house, and showed me fifty little back-doors, dark closets, and narrow passages, in alterations and contrivances of which kind he had busied his head most part of the vacation; for he was scarcely ever without some notable joiner, or a bricklayer extraordinary, in pay, for twenty years. And there are so many odd, obscure places about a theatre that his genius in nook-building was never out of employment; nor could the most vain-headed author be more deaf to an interruption in reciting his works than our wise master was while entertaining me with the improvements he had made in his invisible architecture, all which, without thinking any one part of it necessary, though I seemed to approve,

I could not help, now and then, breaking in upon his delight, with the impertinent question of, "But, master, where are the actors?" But, to speak of him seriously, and to account for this disregard to his actors, his notion was that singing and dancing, or any sort of exotic entertainments, would make an ordinary company of actors too hard for the best set, who had only plain plays to subsist on.

The deserters now flourished exceedingly at the Haymarket, and the old King's house was quite deserted. It may be conceived that the patentees, who for years had been struggling in Chancery with their deputy, now found themselves almost helpless. They were next obliged to support the ingenious attorney in his next step, which was to obtain an order from the Chamberlain that the players should be forced back from the one new house to their old. In vain they appealed and protested; they had to obey, and in 1708 returned to play at Drury Lane. But now fresh complications arose from a bold attempt made to snatch the government from Rich's hands.

It has been mentioned that Rich was the solicitor of Sir Thomas Skipwith, who appears to have been a careless, improvident gentleman, and had allowed, or he could not hinder, his wily adviser to gain possession of his share of the patent for "a song." Cibber, however, not knowing of this transaction, relates a curious story to the effect that Sir Thomas, having conceived a sort of convivial friendship for a man of fashion—Colonel Brett—went on a visit to him, and "the pleasantness of the place and the agreeable manner of passing his time" raised him to such a gallantry of heart that he offered to make him a present of the patent," owning, at the same time, that he had not received a penny from it for ten years. The Colonel gaily accepted the proposal, and thus became a manager. This singular arrangement seems to be explained by a passage in the deed of indenture made between the two gentlemen, a copy of which is now before me, and which shows that it was intended to dispute Rich's claim to Skipwith's share; for it is stated, with emphasis, that Sir Thomas had not parted with his property, though he admitted that the patent and other papers were in Rich's custody. It was added, also, that it was not likely that these could be obtained without proceedings at law, and he constituted the Colonel his "attorney" or representative. This shows clearly that the Colonel, who was a man of spirit, had

offered to fight his friend's battle with Rich, who was either in fraudulent possession or had a lien on the patent for advances of money.

Colonel Brett appears to have been a match for the manager, and, by his ability and quiet behaviour, gradually acquired influence. "Rich saw his power daily mouldering from his own hands, into those of Mr. Brett, whose gentlemanly manner of making everyone's business easy to him threw their old master under a disregard which he had not been used to, nor could, with all his happy change of affairs, support. Although this grave theatrical minister had acquired the reputation of a most profound politician by being often incomprehensible, yet I am not sure that his conduct at this juncture gave us not an evident proof that he was, like other frail mortals, more a slave to his passions than his interest; for no creature ever seemed more fond of power than so little knew how to use it to his profit and reputation; otherwise, he could not possibly have been so discontented, in his secure and prosperous state of the theatre, as to resolve, at all hazards, to destroy it."

With this view, he adopted a new and ingenious policy, viz., to range himself on the side of the patentees, and contrived that they should now begin to receive some profits. In return they gave him their influence, and the Colonel soon found that his situation was untenable. The first fruits of this *tactique* were that Sir Thomas Skipwith took proceedings at law to have the assignment he had so generously made cancelled; the Colonel made no defence, and resigned all his interest in the enterprise. It seems likely that this was the act of Rich himself, to whom a prior conveyance of the Skipwith interest had been made. Being now restored to full authority, he resumed his old tyranny, and ground down the luckless actors in the most arbitrary way. For a time they were helpless and submitted, until the step he took of seizing on a third of the profits of every benefit brought matters to a crisis. They appealed to the Chamberlain, who, thinking this treatment monstrous, determined to interfere, especially as Rich treated his orders with contempt. One day, when he was tyrannising over his company, the blow fell in a most unexpected and truly dramatic style. One of the actors was in the secret, having seen the order at the Chamberlain's office—when being called to his part, and somewhat hastily questioned by the patentee

for his neglect of business, this actor, "with an erected look, and a theatrical spirit," at once threw off the mask, and roundly told him:—"Sir, I have now no more business here than you have; in half an hour you will neither have actors to command nor authority to employ them." The patentee, though he could not readily comprehend his mysterious manner of speaking, had just a glimpse of terror enough from the words to soften his reproof into a cold, formal declaration that "if he would not do his work he should not be paid." But now, to complete the catastrophe, enters the messenger, with the order of silence in his hand, whom the same actor officiously introduced, telling the patentee that the gentleman wanted to speak with him from the Lord Chamberlain. When the messenger had delivered the order, the actor, throwing his head over his shoulder towards the patentee, in the manner of Shakespeare's Harry the Eighth to Cardinal Wolsey, cried:—"Read o'er that! and now—to breakfast, with what appetite you may." Though these words might be spoken in too vindictive and insulting a manner to be commended, yet from the fulness of a heart injuriously treated, and now relieved by that instant occasion, why might they not be pardoned?"

The authority of the patent now no longer subsisting, all the confederated actors immediately walked out of the house, to which they never returned till they became themselves the tenants and masters of it.

This remonstrant was probably Cibber himself.

The unlucky Rich, thus deserted, could only close his doors. But he kept possession. A further repulse was now in store for him. Among the patentees was a certain attorney—another of the fraternity!—Mr. W. Collier, who was also M.P. for Truro. This gentleman was of jovial habits, and intimate with the ministers, with some of whom he spent his convivial hours. He without difficulty obtained a licence to act plays. But how was Rich to be driven out? He took the extraordinary course of collecting a mob in front of the theatre, lighting a bonfire, giving the players money to drink the King's health, on which the players obtained soldiers and others, and actually burst into the theatre. The players took possession, but found that Rich had carried off all the clothes and "props," so that they were obliged to play in their ordinary dresses.

The players flocked to Collier's standard, and everything seemed

to promise favourably. He appointed Aaron Hill his manager, under whose directions the inconstant actors soon revolted. One night they broke into a riot, "beat a poor fellow blind," and, bursting into the manager's room, Leigh struck his brother with a stick, while Powell "shortening his sword," was about to stab the manager. The audience got on the stage, and the whole was a most extraordinary scene. Rich was seen to pass by, and was received with shouts of "We are doing your work, master!" It was no wonder that he was supposed to have instigated the riot.

He did not seem, however, to have profited by this demonstration, and he never regained possession of the old house; but, with much spirit, he turned his thoughts to a new scheme—that of rebuilding his old theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was close to the present Sardinia Chapel. He was in possession of the patent, and the King good-naturedly granted him a licence. In September, 1714, it was complete, and on the 20th of that month he invited a number of connoisseurs and eminent painters to come and have "a private view" of the decorations, which were on a magnificent and pretentious scale. Over the stage was shown Apollo and the Muses, while on the platform was painted a circular balustrade, leaning on which were grouped Shakespeare Ben Jonson, and others, apparently in conversation with Betterton! This seems like something in our time, and such an invitation was given on the opening of the Savoy Theatre. "We hear," said the reporter, "that the theatre will be opened next week." But it was not opened at that time—no doubt, owing to the manager's illness—nor did he see the opening. In a few weeks he died—on November 4th—and on December 8th the first performance was given, the manager's son, Mr. John Rich, coming forward to speak the prologue "dressed in mourning."

"But, O, my poor father, alas! he died
Ere he beheld this house in finished pride."



"Nothing to Eat."

(POEM FOR RECITATION,)

BY FRED. W. BROUGHTON.

SIR Arthur Fitz-Herbert got home about five,
From a very enjoyable mid-winter drive ;
He'd been to the Court-house some ten miles away,
The sessions, you know, had been held on that day—
For he was a Magistrate grim and severe,
With only a paltry twelve thousand a year.
Some three or four wretches he'd sent to atone
For laying their hands on things not their own ;
With sips from his wine flask he'd fined as he ought,
Four tramps who were " beery " at fourpence a quart ;
A lean haggard cripple, with paralysed leg,
Was booked " three months hard " just for daring to beg ;
'Tis wicked, 'tis *shocking* for such to entreat
A trifle for bread when there's nothing to eat.

My Lady Fitz-Herbert lounged in her boudoir,
And dawdled through novels from Mudie's huge store,
Fat poodles—her friends were so wont to admire—
Lay coiled up in comfort before the bright fire,
And dainty sweet biscuits lay scattered close by,
The doggies had lunched, and now dinner was nigh.
Sir Arthur stepped in :—" Why, my Lady, it's five,
And really I feel far more dead than alive,
For *I've* tasted nothing since breakfast, you know,
Save sherry and sandwiches—six, say, or so—
My delicate stomach's not used to restraint,
And just now I feel most confoundedly faint.
For two cups of coffee, three rashers of ham,
A couple of eggs and some apricot jam,
Before ten o'clock, it was all that I ate,
Now, that's not a meal for a good magistrate.
So go dress, my lady, lets hurry and dine,
Remember, *we never have supper till nine.*
Yes, order the dinner, and have the gong beat,
Indeed, I'm half perished for something to eat."

Now, just as Sir Arthur was leaving the room
 To dress, his wife's face was o'erspread with a gloom,
 As she murmured, in sad and sorrowful tone,
 "Dear Arthur, with much indignation I own,
 That fool of a butler on going to Town
 To order our m^enu, fell suddenly down
 In a fit—so at least by the doctor it's said—
 And was borne on a board to the hospital—dead.
 Only half an hour since I was told of the fact,
 Without any time how to think, how to act,
 It's very annoying to me and to you,
 (The man came with such a good character too.)
 This wretch of a servant dares die in the street,
 Whilst we here, his betters, have nothing to eat."

"What, nothing at all?" roared the fierce Baronet—
 "No, nothing at all," fumed his wife in her fret,
 "Some soup, it is true, p'raps some turbot and trout,
 Of game, though, I'm pained to confess we are out.
 There's a cold chicken left,—but cold stuff will not do,
 But Cook p'raps can manage to dish a ragout.
 Of course there is always a chop or a steak,
 But such common food only common folks take;
 Then there is a cutlet of lamb with spring peas,
 And it needn't be said, ev'ry species of cheese,
 The hot-house is crowded, the wine cellar's stored,
 And as to cigars you've a regular horde,
 But still, my dear Arthur, with tears I repeat,
 For dinner to-day we have nothing to eat."

MORAL :

Sir Arthur Fitz-Herbert, B A R T., J.P.,
 Hear a word from a poor humble scribbler like me,
 Don't give me six months if I pray you to hie
 From your Hall to thehovels—ah, sadly close by—
 Behold! the poor mortals who quiver and quail
 In the cold,—look on faces all tear-worn and pale,
 And in your own hunger just now, if you're just,
 Consider the famished who'd gloat o'er a crust.
 When you think of your hearth burning higher and higher,
 Ponder well how you'd manage without any fire;
 Muse over your tenant roll, Mammon content,
 And muse then on those with no money for rent,
 Weigh these thoughts, and then dare, at your ancestral seat,
 To say before God you have nothing to eat.

Shakespeare's Two Characters of Antony and Cleopatra.

BY H. SCHÜTZ WILSON.

ONE of the finest touches in Shakespeare's art is shown in the way in which he reflects light upon any one of his complex characters by means of the speech of some other character, which serves for a chorus to interpret for us hidden and subtle meaning ; and yet speaks within the limits of the truly dramatic. This delicate art finds many instances in many of his plays, and here, when Antony vaunts his idle boastful challenge to Cæsar, Enobarbus helps us with his comment—

Yes, like enough, high-battled Cæsar will
Unstate his happiness, and be staged to the show
Against a sworder ! I see men's judgments are
A parcel of their fortunes ; and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will
Answer his emptiness !—Cæsar, thou hast subdued
His judgment too.

The success of Cæsar's ambassador shows that Cæsar had judged worthless Cleopatra rightly. Antony's dearest is ready to quit him. She pleads—

Mine honour was not yielded,
But conquered merely.

The old lion comes in when Cleopatra is yielding her hand to be kissed by Thyreus. Not the injuries she had done him, not even her treachery, could move Antony to anger against the syren, but an outrage to love stirs him to a flame of passionate, scornful, indignation—

You were half blasted ere I knew you :—Ha !
Have I my pillow left unpressed in Rome,
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
And by a gem of women, to be abused
By one that looks on feeders ?

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*

You have been a boggler ever :
 But when we in our viciousness grow hard—
 O misery on't ! the wise gods seal our eyes ;
 In our own filth drop our clear judgments ; make us
 Adore our errors ; laugh at's while we strut
 To our confusion.

* * * *

I found you as a morsel cold upon
 Dead Cæsar's trencher : nay, you were a fragment
 Of Cneius Pompey's ; besides what hotter hours,
 Unregistered in vulgar fame, you have
 Luxuriously picked out : for I am sure,
 Though you can guess what temperance should be
 You know not what it is.

At the time at which it is most easy to make the falling Antony angry, he finds his worthless love is false and shows her that he knows her to be what she really is ; and yet he speaks as much in sorrow as in anger. Antony is not generally cruel ; and yet the presumptuous Thyreus is whipped. Cleopatra's artful defence of herself satisfies the easily-gulled Antony, and he prepares for his last battle. His mood is one of personal fury and desperation—

If from the field I shall return once more
 To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood :
 I and my sword will earn our chronicle :
 There's hope in't yet.

* * * *

I will be treble-sinew'd, hearted, breath'd,
 And fight maliciously : for when mine hours
 Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
 Of me for jests ; but now I'll set my teeth,
 And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
 Let's have one other gaudy night.

Again Enobarbus assists us, and says—

Now he'll out-stare the lightning. To be furious
 Is to be frighted out of fear. . . .
 . . . and I see still
 A diminution in our captain's brain
 Restores his heart ; when valour preys on reason
 It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
 Some way to leave him.

Henceforward Antony is subject to varying moods—of fury, despair, pathos, distraction. The firm mind is wrecked, and the overstrained spirit is clouded by ever-changing tones of feeling and by half-distraught fantasies. He would “drown consideration.” Within him, as without him, is ruin ; and his doom

closes darkly around him. He is, at times, almost hysterical; but he always remains courteous and generous. When Enobarbus deserts him, Antony says—

Go, Eros, send his treasure after ; do it ;
 Detain no jot, I charge thee ; write to him—
 I will subscribe—gentle adieus and greetings :
 Say, that I wish he never find more cause
 To change a master. O, my fortunes have
 Corrupted honest men !

With—

One of those odd tricks which sorrow shoots
 Out of the mind ;

Antony, in a mood of sorrowful tenderness, bids his servitors—

Tend me to-night ;
 May be, it is the period of your duty ;
 Haply you shall not see me more ; or if,
 A mangled shadow : perchance, to-morrow
 You'll serve another master. I look on you
 As one that takes his leave.

When remonstrated with for giving them “ this discomfort,” the falling hero falls into hysterical laughter, very sad to hear—

Ho ! ho ! ho !
 Now the witch take me, if I meant it thus !

The fair, tender hands of Cleopatra buckle on the armour of Antony for the great captain's last despairing fight. He goes forth, and she, with treachery in her heart, cries—

That he and Cæsar might
 Determine this great war in single fight !
 Then, Antony—but now—Well, on.

“ But now ” expresses the apprehensions which lead her to think only of her own interests.

Then follow two days of furious fighting. On the first day Antony is triumphant ; on the second day he again fights at sea, and all is lost. Cæsar is the victor.

Scarus tells us that, before the last engagement—

Antony
 Is valiant, and dejected ; and, by starts,
 His fretted fortunes give him hope, and fear,
 Of what he has, and has not.

But his fortunes are no longer “ fretted.” After the last fatal fight they are sunk in cureless ruin, in irretrievable disaster, which

destroys all illusion, and kills all hope. Then the hapless Antony falls into frenzy—

All is lost ;
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me ;

* * * *

Triple-turned whore ! 'tis thou
Hast sold me to this novice ; and my heart
Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly ;
For when I am revenged upon my charm,
I have done all.

O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more ;
Fortune and Antony part here, even here
Do we shake hands.

* * * *

Betrayed I am :
O this false soul of Egypt ! this grave charm,
Whose eyes beck'd forth my wars and call'd them home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.

* * * *

The witch shall die ;
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot : she dies for't.

Shrinking before his fierce fury, Cleopatra, after her wont, seeks safety in deceit—

To the monument !
Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself ;
Say, that the last I spoke was " Antony,"
And word it, prithee, piteously : Hence, Mardian,
And bring me how he takes my death. To the monument !

Antony is telling Eros :

I made these wars for Egypt ; and the Queen—
Whose heart, I thought, I had, for she had mine ;
Which, whilst it was mine, had annex'd unto't
A million moe, now lost—she, Eros, has
Pack'd cards with Cæsar, and false play'd my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.

When Mardian enters with his false but doleful tidings of Cleopatra's death, he brings news which is, to Antony, the end of soldiership, of hope, of love and life. The passage equals in pathos " Othello's occupation's gone !"

Unarm, Eros ; the long day's task is done,
And we must sleep.

* * * *

No more a soldier. Bruised pieces, go ;
 You have been nobly borne.
 I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
 Weep for my pardon.

* * * *

Stay for me :
 Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
 And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze :
 Dido and her Æneas shall want troops
 And all the haunts be ours.

His fancy delighted to think that their ghosts would remain together, and that they would still love in the world of shadows. Cleopatra knew that Cæsar wished the death of Antony, and that he would favour her if she should bring about his death. She must have divined that the news of her death would impel Antony to his death. The dissolute but tender hero runs upon his sword, and, when dying of the mortal stroke, he learns Cleopatra's last falsehood, and finds that she still lives. With death fast descending upon him, Antony is borne into the monument to her, and he importunes death awhile—

Until
 Of many thousand kisses the poor last
 I lay upon thy lips.

Even in that supreme moment of his agony and dissolution she is politic, and replies :

I dare not, dear,
 Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not,
 Lest I be taken.

The next moment there comes over her a wave of memory and passion—

Die where thou hast lived :
 Quicken with kissing : Had my lips that power,
 Thus would I wear them out.

After her great prince has left her, Cleopatra breaks into a fine burst of most passionate indignation ; but, even then, she shows but little tenderness for the dead lover whom she had brought to ruin and to death.

The fifth act is void of Antony—the hero has left the earth ; and a sort of duel of duplicity between Cæsar and Cleopatra remains. Agrippa says of dead Antony :

A rarer spirit never
 Did steer humanity ; but you, gods, will give us
 Some faults to make us men. Cæsar is touched.

And Cæsar does worthily lament his mate in empire feeling ; the pity of it that—

We could not stall together
In the whole world.

The last of the triumvirate desires to deceive Cleopatra as to his intents, and to prevent her from suicide :

For her life in Rome
Would be eternal in our triumph.

She learns from Dolabella that it is Cæsar's fixed purpose to lead her in triumph ; and then defeated Egypt has an interview with conquering Cæsar ; but this politic boy is not to be won over as was his great ancestor. To him that knows so much, she confesses that she has

Been laden with like frailties, which before
Have often shamed our sex.

Cæsar leaves her, and she feels—

He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not
Be noble to myself.

She will not bear to be, as an Egyptian puppet, shown to the Roman mob, and so—

Now, Charmian !
Show me, my women, like a queen ; go fetch
My best attires ; I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony ; sirrah, Iras, go.
Now noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed,
And when thou hast done this chare I'll give thee leave
To play till doomsday. Bring our crown and all.

She rises, with Pagan heroism, to her resolve of death. She will die, though conquered, yet as Queen. Her last scene shall be splendidly acted. She rises to the ideal altitude of escaping Cæsar, and of rejoining Antony by a death inflicted by her own will.

The countryman brings the worm of Nilus—

Give me my robe, put on my crown ; I have
Immortal longings in me. . . .

. . . . Methinks I hear
Antony call : I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act.

Husband, I come ;
Now to that name my courage prove my title !
I am fire and air : my other elements
I give to baser life.

Come, then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian ; Iras, long farewell.

The rapt majesty of Egypt feels that :

The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desired.

The faithful Charmian finds the crown awry, mends it, and dies, saying :

It is well done, and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.

Cæsar enters, to find Cleopatra and her women dead ; but dead in the calmness of stately regal beauty and splendour. The asp had done its work well and painlessly—

She shall be buried by her Antony ;
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them ; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory, which
Brought them to be lamented.

Antony and Cleopatra remain for ever a famous pair of erring and yet royal lovers ; and that they do so remain is owing, in great part, to our English Shakespeare.

What an immortal picture is that, in the fatal monument, when Cæsar and his train re-enter ! In royal robes, wearing proudly her regal diadem, Cleopatra, in all her majestic loveliness, lies upon the golden couch in that deep calm of a sleep which shall never know a waking. Her loves, and crimes, and sorrows are all past, and it is her triumph that she cannot be dragged in the triumph of any conqueror. The great columns suggest a haze of colour in dim shadow. The building is full of soft air, sun-steeped in the languor and the heat of dreamy Egypt ; and at the foot of the throne, which she alone can occupy, lie Charmian and Iras, who had served her in life and are faithful unto death. The "venomous fool" has crawled away, after doing its work of death ; and sad Cæsar looks, with pity and respect, upon the last of the two victims of his victory. A great painter might make a great picture out of this glorious subject, in which there is no action, and all incidents lend themselves to the painter's art.

"It has been said that in the construction of Shakespeare's dramas there is, apart from all other 'faculties,' as they are called, an understanding manifested equal to that in Bacon's

Novum Organum. That is true ; and it is not a truth that strikes everyone. It would become more apparent if we tried, any of us for himself, how, out of Shakespeare's dramatic materials, we could fashion such a result." So Carlyle ; and although the same thing may be done with certain other of Shakespeare's plays, yet with no play can we more easily compare the finished work with the quarry out of which he rough hewed the materials which he shaped to his ends. Plutarch has supplied the mere facts which the creative genius of Shakespeare has transmuted into poetry and informed with dramatic life. English literature is fortunate in possessing the translation made by Sir Thomas North, Knight, of the "Lives" of that "grave and learned philosopher and historiographer," Plutarch. Sir Thomas did not translate from the original Greek, but from the French of James Amiot, "Abbot of Bellogane, Bishop of Auxerre, one of the King's Privy Counsel, and Great Almoner of France." North's translation was made in 1579, and was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth ; and his translation is of surpassing interest to us because it is the work which Shakespeare used for all his classical plays—for "Julius Cæsar," "Antony and Cleopatra," "Coriolanus," "Timon of Athens." The copy which I possess is the folio volume, printed in Cambridge by John Hayes, for George Sawbridge, at the Bible on Ludgate Hill, London, Anno Dom. MDCLXXVI. Shakespeare, of course, made use of the original edition. Internal evidence alone is amply sufficient to prove that Shakespeare based his play on North's translation. In North we find the suggestion for the gorgeous description of Cleopatra in her royal barge upon the Cydnus ; and we find nearly all the other incidents which have served the poet's turn. But the marvel to critical insight is, to compare translation with drama, and to note what Shakespeare has made out of mere incident and simple narrative. There comes the miracle of genius. The two characters of Antony and of Cleopatra (not to mention other characters in the drama) are wholly created by our English poet. To a student of Elizabethan English North must always be a source of delight. His style is so pregnant, so racy, so graphic, so instinct with the idiom and the impulse of that noble time, that we read North with a kind of rapture, and have to acknowledge that he was worthy to be used by Shakespeare.

One of the horrors which appalled the imagination of Cleopatra



"— and I 'ope it'll make no difference."

THE SQUIRE.

MR. BRANDON THOMAS.

when she had to dread the ignomony of a Roman triumph, was the idea that—

The quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' the posture of a whore.

And Shakespeare himself, when he wrote the character, could only look forward to some boy, "squeaking Cleopatra," to present his royal horoine. In his day, on his stage, women were only acted by boys. How he must have longed, in inner fancy, for a capable actress to represent Cleopatra! It is wonderful, but for the fact that ideals transcend all facts, that a dramatist should be able to conceive such a character to be represented by a boy actor.

One or two historical facts are of interest in connexion with a consideration of Shakespeare's play. Alexandria was founded as a city and a capital by Alexander, 332 B.C. The first of the Greek dynasty of Egyptian kings was Ptolemæus Sotor, who began his reign 323 B.C. He was a Macedonian general, who had served both Philip and Alexander, and who, on the death of Alexander, recieved Egypt as his reward. On the promontory called Lochias he built that palace of the Ptolemies in which Cleopatra lived, and reigned, and loved. She was of pure Greek race, and had little Egyptian strain in her blood. Her father was Ptolemy Auletes, and she was born 69 B.C. Ptolemy Auletes was the illegitimate son of Lathyrus, and was a weak and vicious man. I can find no clear record of the character of Cleopatra's mother; but the great Queen probably knew no more of a mother's love or care than does a chicken that has been hatched by an incubator. Her father was deposed, and had to fly from Egypt. His eldest daughter, Berenice, and her husband, Archelaus, ruled in his absence; but when he returned, the father put his daughter and son-in-law to death. Cleopatra had two brothers, each of whom bore the name of Ptolemy; and she was married successively to these two Ptolemies. After her father's death she shared the throne with her husband brother, the elder Ptolemy, who was younger than his wife; but the two sovereigns did not agree. After Ptolemy's death Cleopatra reigned alone. Her second boy-brother-husband did not share the throne with her. She went to

Rome with Julius Cæsar, and in Rome she poisoned her young brother.

It is a little surprising that no great English actress should have connected her reputation with a character so sumptuous and so subtle. Mrs. Siddons played Dryden's Cleopatra, but never essayed Shakespeare's Cleopatra. I should, however, hardly imagine that the grand and noble tragic actress could have adequately presented

The strong coil of her grace ;

or could have realised the dissolute Queen. Mrs. Siddons, great artist as she was, would probably have been found wanting in the pliant versatility of witchery and of wantonness. I have only seen "Antony and Cleopatra" acted at Sadler's Wells Theatre. Phelps was not suited by Antony, but George Bennet was an excellent Enobarbus. Miss Glyn had well conceived Cleopatra, and acted many shades of the part finely ; but yet failed wholly to satisfy our ideal of "Egypt." She did not convince us with the full illusion of the subtle serpent of old Nile. Macready played Antony in 1833 ; but he has left but scanty record of the effect produced by the play and by the part.

After the assassination of Julius Cæsar, she returned to Alexandria, and there commenced her amour with the amorous Antony—they lived together as lovers for about fourteen years. Julius Cæsar was the father of her son, Cæsarion, who was put to death by Octavianus. By Antony she had three children—Alexander, Ptolemy, and a daughter, who continued the mother's name of Cleopatra. Surely a daughter of Antony and of Cleopatra must have been a wonder of beauty and of wit. The younger Cleopatra married Juba, King of Mauritania. All these three children graced the triumph of Cæsar on his return to Rome, after the deaths of their renowned parents. Octavius, or Octavianus, was the grand-nephew of Julius Cæsar, but was adopted as a son by the great Cæsar. Octavius was the son of Atia, daughter of Cæsar's sister, Julia, and was nineteen years of age at the time of the murder of Julius. Octavia, the second wife of Antony, was the half-sister of Octavianus. At the time of their deaths, 31 B.C., Cleopatra was thirty-eight, and Antony, says Plutarch, was fifty-three, or, as some say, fifty-six years of age.

The coin which presents us with the only extant likeness of Cleopatra, does not give evidence of surpassing facial beauty.

Plutarch—rendered to us by the quaint Sir Thomas North—tells us that, “Now her beauty (as it is reported) was not no passing as unmatchable of other women, nor yet such as upon present view did enamour men with her; but so sweet was her company and conversation, that a man could not possibly but be taken. And, besides her beauty, the good grace she had to talk and to discourse, her courteous nature, that tempered her words and deeds, was a spur that pricked to the quick. Furthermore, besides all these, her voice and words were marvellous pleasant; for her tongue was an instrument of music to divers sports and pastimes, the which she easily turned into any language that pleased her.”

The truth is that such women become ideals in our imagination, and the image that we form of them transcends all realistic description, or careful analysis of the quality of their charm. Mary Queen of Scots was another of the witch-women of history in whom loveliness exceeded even beauty. Cleopatra had no thick lips or broad nose. She had nothing of the Egyptian type, and was pure Greek in shape, in feature, in purity of line, and delicacy of form. Tawny she may have been—but dusky, never. Her expression must have been ever changing and yet always ravishing. Her eyes must have been glorious—full of wit, fire, force, and yet with hardness in their depths. Beneath Phœbus’ amorous kisses she may have been burned into a golden glow of voluptuous softness; and we always fancy her with as much stately majesty as is compatible with utter grace. She was full of natural magic, and could fill an adorer with fine frenzy, with infatuated intoxication, with passionate folly, with delirious delight. Such a lover would reckon as little as Antony did of ruin, disgrace, dishonour, and death. She made men mad, and made them happy in their madness. She was irresistible, and she subjugated a lover with demoniacal possession, with a ceaseless fever in the veins, and with unsteady fire in the brain. As we read of her in our Shakespeare, and gradually learn to see and to hear her, we image to ourselves such matchless charm that we can feel with, while we pity, Antony. His infatuation is, at least, explicable. He was besotted by shameful passion; but we can well understand why and how he was besotted. The flower chains which held him in hours of lascivious dalliance hardened into iron chains which bound him to his fall when the dark day of danger and disaster came. She had enslaved and enervated his will, and rendered

nugatory his captaincy and courage. Our pleasant vices become scourges in the hands of the just gods, and the fate of Antony is an illustration of moral retribution. Her's was a dæmonic nature, and her's were dæmonic gifts—but, oh, the witchery of all this sumptuous and seductive evil! Of his two characters of Antony, and of Cleopatra, it were almost idle, perhaps unnecessary, to enquire which of the two be the more perfectly rendered. It may seem a strange thing to say, but yet, in its essence, the character of Antony is the more complex. It extends over a wider range of faculties and of feelings. Cleopatra has more wit: Antony more intellect. With her the rock of selfishness stands bare from out the whirlpool of the waves of passion: with Antony, self is hidden by his love. It sounds like a paradox, but it is true, that the character of Cleopatra is simple owing to her duplicity. The key-notes of her character and actions are policy and passion; but the generous infatuation of the fond Antony is most impolitic, and disregards all his truer and higher interests. Antony was capable of fervent love; of love illicit and unhallowed but yet strong unto death. Cleopatra had no real love, even for Antony. She was incapable of the nobleness and devotion of love, but she could feel strongly a sensual fantasy, a vanity in lust, and a desire for the protection and the benefits conferred by the greatest prince of the world, who could shield Egypt, and could give away kingdoms. Shakespeare has drawn his Cleopatra hard; she is never really tender. Always feminine, she is yet rarely womanly. She lived her life without thinking about living or about life; while Antony, like Macbeth, can outsoar the ignorant present, can recognise the dealings of the gods, and can feel the pathos of the conscious degradation of a noble spirit. The high abstract thought and splendid imagery are given to Antony and not to Cleopatra. He it is, and not she, that sees “a cloud that's dragonish.” Full of guile, her uncloying charm always stimulated and irritated, and retained her lover. To her it was not hardness to dissemble. Antony could make a fool of himself for the sake of the woman that he loved; Cleopatra could suck out advantage from the man that loved her. Her passions went hand in hand with her interests; she had amours with Cæsar, Pompey, Antony. In Antony's dual nature, one part of him was obscured by blind passion, while his better part of man knew, with indignation, that he was the doting dupe of a worthless wanton. His anger

against Cleopatra was sharpened by self-contempt. While still under her potent spell, he had the bitterness of feeling that his higher nature knew her to be as she really was ; and yet he could not shake off her fascination. Antony had in him a strain of the heroic, but it was heroism debased by weakness, and enervated by sensuality. If Antony had conquered Cæsar—and at one time it seemed possible that he might do so—Cleopatra would have remained faithful to her lover ; but when Cæsar seemed likely to become, and, indeed, became supreme victor, she was ready to intrigue with Cæsar, and the dread of being dragged in his Roman triumph alone impelled her to seek Antony in death. Had Cæsar renounced the crowning glory of his triumph, she might have lived to bewitch the last of the great triumvirs. And yet, while we know her baseness, she remains for us—as she was to Antony—a being of irresistible attraction, a woman of glorious charm.

We have left ourselves no space to dwell upon the structure of the play, or to analyse its many other characters. We have been absorbed, in this brief essay, in an attempt to admire and to enjoy Shakespeare's two great characters of Antony and of Cleopatra.



The Stage Curtain.

BY W. J. LAWRENCE.

IN examining a play of the Stuart-Elizabethan era, it must have been frequently remarked by earnest students of the drama—and more particularly those *rare aves*, who, to the ordinary judgment of the critic, unite the practical eye of the actor—that no matter how adroitly the catastrophe may have been worked out, the actual stage picture with which the piece concluded was, as a rule, weak and ineffective in the extreme. And this despite the fact that the final act of most tragedies and histories of the period was crammed to repletion with bustling incident; indeed, the inference that little or no attempt was made to form a picturesque or striking tableau, such as is now a recognised feature of most *dramatic* performances, is readily deducible from a variety of sources. Look at Hamlet, for example. Nine out of every ten modern playwrights would have terminated the piece with the death of the Prince; but Shakespeare must needs bring Fortinbras upon the scene to create an anti-climax, and bore the audience inexpressibly with a windy oration. In many instances the Stuart-Elizabethan dramatist permitted his characters to depart one by one until a bare stage was left in view of the audience—bare, that is, save for the tobacco-taking gallants of the day who lounged thereon, and whose presence undoubtedly militated against the formation of appropriate grouping. In the case of a comedy the performance was oftentimes concluded with a lively dance, or the epilogue was spoken by the heroine “in character” while still on the stage among others of the *dramatis personæ*—neither of which terminations was absolutely devoid of effect, although the strict relevancy of their introduction might be gravely called in question. Now, it goes without saying that one would be committing the grossest of errors in attributing these minor defects to sheer ignorance of stage exigencies, or a mere want of constructive ability on the part of

the great dramatists of this most halcyon period. The blame of the matter rests almost entirely upon the primitive mechanism of the contemporary playhouses. The mystic world behind the scenes could not be neatly and effectively cut off from the material world *before* for the simple reason that the arras or worsted curtain, then in vogue, was divided into two parts, which were furnished with rings placed upon an iron rod, and had to be drawn across the stage by a more or less clumsy attendant. We can thus see that, even if the author or stage manager had paid some attention to the final grouping of his characters, his efforts would in all probability have been rendered fruitless by the rude means whereby the scene was shut off from the view of the audience. But in point of scenical and mechanical embellishment our early theatres were half a century behind the times. At first sight it appears naturally surprising that, although elaborately-constructed scenery was a common feature of the Court Masques of James the First, the introduction and general use of this vitally important theatrical adjunct should have been delayed until after the Restoration; and yet very little reflection suffices to explain away the apparent difficulty. It may be premised that the actors were already too far impeded in their movements by the presence of the privileged stool-holders to permit of their discussing the advisability of introducing an extra incubus in the shape of Inigo Jones's innovation; add to this the more powerful objection of expense, and the apparent wantonness of this procrastination disappears into thin air. A similar argument does not hold good, however, in the case of the ordinary roller curtain, which, as Malone explicitly informs us, was first brought into use in England by Inigo Jones in the early Court Masques. But the simultaneous existence of two widely different kinds of curtains naturally draws our attention to the strange history of that obviously necessary theatrical auxiliary. Viewed in its entirety, this will serve the ulterior purpose of indicating that the stage curtain, at every period of its existence, has exercised a considerable influence upon the constructive nature of every play which it ushered in.

When Æschylus, *circa* B.C. 490, elevated the primitive drama to the dignity of a "local habitation and a name"—widening its scope by augmenting the number of personages and adding the deceptive qualities of scenical detail—he omitted to furnish this earliest Temple with the wherewithal to hide the preparation of

the rites from the prying eyes of the assembled worshippers. On this account his own plays and those of Sophocles begun and ended with an absolutely bare stage—a system involving the sacrifice of so much theatrical effect without minimising the labours of the author that subsequent dramatists, beginning with Euripides, set their faces sternly against it; hence the adoption of an extraordinary species of stage curtain, devised as a screen, not to the entire logeum, but to the comparatively smaller proscenium in the background. This was attached to a roller working beneath the stage, and descended through a slit in the boards at the beginning of the performance and was drawn upwards at its termination. The Romans, who derived their theatre from the Greeks, not only appropriated this curious stage curtain, but likewise retained its original appellation of *auloeum*. In Rome it remained in general vogue until the disruption of the Empire; but with the revival of Literature and Art in Italy came the erection of temporary wooden stages, whose primitive construction led to the introduction of that double curtain which was afterwards transferred to the early Spanish and English theatres.

At this juncture, however, the history of the stage curtain becomes perplexingly entangled, as Mediæval Italy was not only devoid of a centre powerful enough to set the mode in things theatrical, but was broken up into a number of petty States, each with a haughtily reserved Court boasting its individual parasites, actors, authors, architects, and even scene painters. When Bojardo's "Timone" was produced at Ferrara, about the year 1490, we find that the double curtains, as well as the traverses—another important feature of the early English stage—were made use of in the representation. It is noteworthy, however, that the first permanent theatre in Italy was erected at Milan, in 1491, by Lodovico detto il Moro, and was built entirely after the manner of Ancient Rome. One obviously looks for the resuscitation, in some measure, of the old "descending" roller curtain to account for Vasari's allusion, in his clever relation of the "Apparato per le Nozze, del principe D. Francisco di Toscano," to the fall of the curtain at the commencement of a Florentine comedy.* Indeed, with its revival an accepted fact,

* *Vide Works*, Tom VII., p. 338.

the great difficulty which that learned authority on the Italian drama, Mr. J. C. Walker, experienced in expounding an important passage in "*Orlando Furioso*," can be readily explained away. In the course of his description of the reception given to Melissa at the castle of Tristano (Canto XXXII. st. 80), Ariosto says:—

Quale al cader de le cortine suole
Parer, fra mille lampade, la scena
D'Archì, e di più d'una superba mole
D'oro, e di statue, e di pitture piena.

of which the following is among the very few faithful translations which have been given:—

Thus, at the curtain's gradual fall we spy,
Amidst a thousand lamps, a prospect fair,
Triumphal arcs, proud piles that threat the sky,
Statues, and fretted gold, and pictures rare.

The first forty cantos of "*Orlando Furioso*" were published in 1515. As they were written at Ferrara, where the poet had some time previously taken up his residence, Mr. Walker naturally surmised that his knowledge of the theatre was entirely derived from observations made in that city. This being so, he found it a matter of extreme difficulty to reconcile Ariosto's allusion with the evidence given in the printed copy of Bojardo's "*Timone*" respecting the use of the double curtains, evidently overlooking that between the years 1490 and 1515 great changes may have taken place consequent upon the example and influence of Milan.

The origin of the ordinary roller curtain, although purely Italian, will probably remain for ever shrouded in mystery; its adoption, however, in the Masques of Inigo Jones furnishes us with some approximate date of its early use on the Continent. We know that in some of the Italian States the primitive double curtain, working on an iron rod, was improved upon by pulling the curtains up on each side in a festoon*; and it is probable that, when the rise of the vernacular drama led to the abandonment of the

* It is amusing in a busy world to read M. Arthur Pougin's sarcastic outburst over certain Wagnerian reforms in his elaborate "*Dictionnaire Historique et Pittoresque du Théâtre*." (Paris, 1885). "*Aujourd'hui*," he says, writing under "*Rideau*," "*l'usage du rideau, tel que nous le voyons pratiqué en France, est général par toute l'Europe; pourtant, Richard Wagner, dont la rage de reforme était vraiment prodigieuse, avait fait établir sur son théâtre de Bayreuth, le double rideau à coulisses, dont les petites baraques de marionnettes sont depuis longtemps les seules à se servir.*"

ancient theatres, the new structures readily lent themselves to the evolution of the roller curtain out of the latter-mentioned method.

In all probability the roller curtain first drew up upon an English theatrical performance when that elegant house, yclept the Duke's, was opened to the public on Friday, June 28, 1661. That the divided curtain was in regular use down to the year 1658, but was superseded by the roller at least as early as 1669, is clearly shown by the two following stage directions: the one from "The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House by Declamation and Musick after the manner of the Ancients" (1658), as arranged by Sir William Davenant; the other from the same author's alteration of "The Tempest" (1669). (1.) "The song ended, the curtains are drawn open again, and the epilogue enters." (2.) "The front of the stage is opened, and the band of twenty-four violins, with the harpsichols and theorbos which accompany the voices are placed between the pit and the stage. While the overture is playing, the curtain rises, and discovers a new frontispiece, joined to the great pilasters on each side of the stage."

With the almost simultaneous adoption in England of scenical accessories and the roller curtain came a powerful and abiding change over the spirit of the drama. The inclusion of scenery, which quickly led to the predominance of spectacular effect, proved the immediate downfall of the poetic drama, as it could no longer afford to ignore the unity of place, and was shorn of its luxuriousness by the material simulation of what had been previously painted by the poet's pen. But the influence of the roller curtain failed to render itself apparent with such surprising celerity. Eventually, however, its presence led to more effective stage grouping, and gave the author valuable assistance in his plausible endeavour to create effect otherwise than by the long accepted juggle of words.

Although our lively Gallic neighbours have hitherto enjoyed the reputation of belonging in the main to the most extreme section of the "prunes and prism" school, in matters theatrical, to them must we accord the unenviable distinction of having originated all those *bizarre* curtains which have, from time to time, outraged the proprieties. Possibly there may be a few old playgoers still living who retain a vivid recollection of having seen themselves reflected in the looking-glass curtain which Cabanelle—at the instigation of Mr. Glossop, the manager, who had witnessed something

similar in Paris—constructed for the Coburg. This enormous gewgaw, which was first exhibited to the patrons of the old melodramatic house on Boxing-day, 1821, was composed of some sixty ingeniously dovetailed pieces, measured about thirty-five feet in height by thirty-three in width, and weighed in all fully five tons! Happily the costly nature of the device prevented its re-duplication over the country; but playgoers of to-day are unfortunately only too familiar with the “advertising” curtain, which has even made its re-appearance in Paris at the new Porte St. Martin, after a number of years of banishment. It is pleasant to turn from all this, and award the French a meed of praise for their invention of that very useful accessory, the *rideau de manœuvre*, or act-drop. “We shall perhaps be arraigned for bad taste,” says the “Dublin Theatrical Observer,” of January 23, 1821, treating of some radical alterations at the local theatre, “but we prefer the Green Curtain. It is much more pleasing to the eye than is the glare from the drop-scene, which, borrowed from our French neighbours, has been substituted in its place. The rising of the curtain, too, gave by contrast a brilliancy to the scene, and was a sort of signal for putting the audience in good humour.” This passage is worthy of note if only because it shows at what particular period the act-drop came into general vogue throughout Great Britain. The obviously necessary use of the stage curtain in France has also given rise to a couple of technicalities, with one of which—*lever de rideau*—we are ourselves conversant, both in its original form and its somewhat slangy equivalent. We have not yet arrived at the length of calling an unpretentious afterpiece a *baisser de rideau*; but, for the matter of that, the “curtain-lowerer” seems to have had its day in England.



Gilbert Abbott à Beckett as a Dramatist.

BY ARTHUR À BECKETT.

UNDER this title an article recently appeared in a theatrical annual of established position which contained so many no doubt unintentional inaccuracies that it may not be out of place for a son of the departed playwright to say what *he* knows about the subject. I am the better able to undertake the task because I have before me, collected in two goodly volumes, my father's dramatic works. At the end of the article to which I have referred brief mention is made of "The King Incog.," which, the writer says, he believes to have been the first piece, my father wrote. He is right. It was the first piece, but I think it deserves a little more attention than he has given to it, as it is a fair example of how a piece was produced fifty years ago. It was written when my father, a lad of two-and-twenty, was connected with a paper called "Figaro in London," of which he was the originator, editor, and entire literary staff. He thus announced it in No. 110, on Saturday, January 11, 1834:—

A new farce, from our own pen, will have been produced here (the Fitzroy Theatre) before this number gets into the nation's hands, though we go to the press too early (for the purpose of supplying the whole world) to know what reception it will experience. It is called "The King Incog.," and, anticipating a failure, we will be beforehand with our apology. The following history of the thing must be an excuse for its errors:

Commenced on Friday,
Finished on Saturday,
Copied on Monday,
Parts distributed on Tuesday,
Rehearsed on Wednesday,
Acted on Thursday,

and (for what we know)

Dead and d——d by Friday,

which is about as concise a record as we are able to give of it. Whatever may be its fate, we shan't care, for it would be poor philosophy in us not to bear a laugh at our own expense when we

indulge in so many at the expense of others. Whether received with favour or the reverse, we bow (in the words of an established claptrap) to the decision of a BRITISH audience!

G'ancing through the pages of this paper (it was illustrated by Seymour, and, according to my friend Mr. Joseph Hatton—an opinion I share with him—the precursor of “Punch”), I can quite understand that my father, as a very outspoken critic himself, must have been nervous of the verdict of his colleagues. However, he had no reason for this apprehension, as the play (it was a particularly bright farce in two acts) was a great success, and, for those days, had a long run. I find in the next number but one of “Figaro in London” an advertisement of its publication, “price one shilling, by John Miller (agent to the Dramatic Authors’ Society), 14, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.” In his preface to the work my father, after pointing out some anachronisms (“having introduced ‘pink notepaper,’ ‘Jacob’s Law Dictionary,’ and ‘the bump of benevolence’ into the time of Charles the Second”), continues: “For other deficiencies the only plea that can be offered is the fact of its being the first dramatic effort of its author, and its having been written in two days, as well as produced so hastily that it was not even rehearsed till the morning before the night of its performance.” He concludes: “These and all other obstacles were triumphantly surmounted by the talents of the performers, and the author, being equally grateful to all, acknowledges his obligations to ‘the whole strength of the company.’” Amongst those performers were Perry, Mitchell, Oxberry, Mr. and Mrs. Manders, and Miss Crisp. Shortly after this my father produced “The Revolt of the Workhouse,” which was played at the Fitzroy in 1834 and the City in 1835. This piece so pleased Mr. Buller, the then Secretary of State for Home Affairs, that that right hon. gentleman went several times to see it. It was a skit upon the abuses of poor-law relief. According to “D—G,” who wrote the prefaces to the pieces published by Cumberland, it was “a pleasant burlesque written in rhyme.” My father is called “Mr. Beckett” by this gentleman, to whom, no doubt, he was quite a new man, and who evidently had not read the title page, in which the author is described as Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, Esq., and said to have “also produced three other popular pieces—‘Man Fred,’ ‘Figaro in London,’ and ‘Unfortunate Miss Bailey.’”

It is scarcely necessary to say that "Man Fred" was a travesty (my father called it a "burlesque ballet opera") of Byron's dramatic poem. At the time Parliament had just abolished the cruel practice of allowing children to be used as chimney sweeps, and the author made the hero a master sweep, whose occupation had gone, owing to the passing of the new Act. "D—G," in his "remarks biographical and critical," calls attention to the merits of Mr. Mitchell, who he describes as "a performer almost new to the London boards," who had gained "great celebrity by his quaintly-comical representation of Man Fred," and hopes "that his merits, which were of a peculiarly amusing and original cast, would meet with due encouragement among the many theatres of the metropolis." He also alludes to the burlesque containing "some good fun with the spirits of our popular Italian vocalists and figurantes, aided by appropriate music." At that time gas was gradually making its way, and Ann Starkie, with her thoughts turned towards wax and tallow, exclaims :

Hope's light gleams faintly, like a kitchen light ;
 But of Hope's candles time expands the wicks—
 The kitchen light becomes a parlour six !
 And then expanding gradually more
 The parlour six—behold ! a drawing-room four !

* * * *

So does philosophy revive the breast
 That with its misery is sore opprest.

Having once taken up his pen to write for the stage, my father's dramatic work increased by leaps and bounds, and, no doubt, he wrote at express rate speed. But, looking through his many works, I find the same good-natured fun, the cheery topical allusions that have done so much to popularise his "Comic Blackstone," and "Comic Histories of England," and "Rome." If I were to quote all I should like to preserve, this paper would be too long ; but I cannot help copying out the following lines, taken from his "Three Graces," produced at the Princess's, April 17, 1843, with Wright, Paul Bedford, and Oxberry in the principal characters. Mercury, disguised as one of the Graces, says :

But since in my companions grace you see,
 I beg you'll for a moment look at me.
 Graces as the opera *danseuse* reveals,
 Besides especially in toes and heels.
 Sir, I would stand for half an hour or so
 On the extremity of my great toe ;

And for five minutes I would almost bear
 To keep one leg suspended in the air ;
 While for so long upon my heel I spin,
 I can scarce stop myself when I begin.
 In saying this I must be right,
 When it commands some fifty pounds per night.

To which Eteocles replies :

If such a feat your feet can do,
 Grace is in all your steps, 'tis very true.
 Upon one leg you stand, I think you say,
 But more than that is witnessed every day ;
 So on that head your claims you must abandon,
 Some keep their ground who've not a leg to stand on.

The second passage appears in "O Gimini! or, the Brothers of Co(u)rse," the last burlesque my father wrote, which was performed at the Haymarket on April 12, 1852. As a burlesque of Corsican hospitality it seems to me particularly happy.

(*Enter Madame DEI FRANCHI.*)

MAYNARD.

Oh, this is Madame dei Franchi.

MADAME. That is my name, sir. You are welcome here :

What will you take ? A glass of wine—some beer ?

A cup of tea ? pray say so if you will ;

A devilled kidney—perhaps you'd like a grill ?

MAYNARD. Thank you, not now ; I'll have some supper later.

MADAME (*to MARIA*). Order one sausage and a hot *potatur*.

(*Exit MARIA.*)

MAYNARD. Though I had been as welcome, perhaps, with none,
 I bring an introduction from your son.

(*Hands letter.*)

MADAME. This letter from my son ? (*To GRIFFO.*) Go tell Maria
 To put fresh coals upon the kitchen fire.

A guest sent by my son is welcome thrice.

(*To GRIFFO.*) Besides the sausage let them boil some rice.

After my father was appointed a metropolitan police magistrate (many years after the date given by the writer in the "Era Almanack"), he gradually ceased writing for the stage, and in his later works was associated with his old friend and colleague, and editor of "Punch," the late Mark Lemon. The arrangement between them was that my father should write the lines, and Mr. Lemon should attend the rehearsals and select the music. So far I have spoken only of my father's burlesques ; but besides the ordinary hackwork of the stock dramatist, which found specimens in his translations, or, as they would now be called, adaptations, of numerous comic operas ("The Ambassadors," played at the St. James's and Princess's ; "The Postilion of Lonjumeau," at the

St. James's ; "The Black Domino," and others), he wrote several very excellent original comedies, full of the smart writing of the school of his contemporary, Douglas Jerrold. He even was author of several serious dramas, but his intensely keen perception of the ridiculous frequently made him mar some of his most impressive situations by the insertion of an inappropriate (because untimely) witticism. From the specimen I have given at the commencement of this article it will be seen that my father was only too prone to laugh at himself, and this was his bent through life. He could never be quite serious. Kind and genial in the highest degree, and in his later years (he died before he was forty-six) most anxious not to wound the susceptibilities of others, he was always ready to make a joke at his own expense. As a proof of the difficulty he experienced in keeping out an anachronism when it raised a laugh, even to the last, I quote from the version of "Don Cæsar de Bazan," prepared by himself and Mr. Lemon. Here I find, in reply to a request of the villainous Don José to get rid of his guests at once, the Marquis de Rotondo, in the time of Charles II. of Spain, in Madrid, is made to say : "Gentlemen, pray lead your partners to the adjoining room ; there is something provided there, which I flatter myself will gratify and astonish you. (*Aside.*) Sandwiches and wine !" To this day several of his farces keep the stage in the provinces, and before the system of travelling companies with London successes they were even more numerous. Amongst these I may mention "The Man with the Carpet Bag," "The Turned Head," and "The Siamese Twins." Charles Dickens had so high an opinion of his dramatic powers that he begged him to prepare some of his stories for the stage to checkmate the unauthorised plagiarists. In this manner "The Chimes" was written, in conjunction with Mr. Lemon. Besides his pieces he wrote the "Quizziology of the British Drama," which cleverly depicted the peculiarities of the stock characters of the drama in 1846, and also a pamphlet entitled "Scenes from the Rejected Comedies by some of the Competitors for the Prize of £500, offered by Mr. B. Webster, Lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, for the best Original Comedy illustrative of English manners," published at the "Punch" office in 1844. This work the writer in the "Era Almanack" confuses with the "Quizziology" which appeared originally as a series of papers in the "Table Book," and was illustrated by George Cruikshank, whose

brother Robert had supplied the place of Seymour, when that artist, in a fit of *pique*, retired from "Figaro in London." In the "Scenes from Rejected Comedies" my father happily parodied the styles of Sheridan Knowles, Douglas Jerrold, Mr. Justice (then Serjeant) Talfourd, J. R. Planché, E. Fitzball, Dion Boucicault, Leigh Hunt, Mark Lemon, Lord Lytton, and—lastly—himself. His parody of "Ion" suggests that before "Trial by Jury" was written a model for such a composition existed. My father treats a call to the Bar in mock heroic fashion which concludes with the following lines:—

MACDONALD (*just called*). Pardon me, noble benchers, if I ask
A boon, like that which Phaëton implored
From Phœbus, his own sire.

* * * *

All I ask is that

In mine own chariot let me drive you home.

FIRST BENCHER. 'Tis well! This high assemblage we dissolve.
Come, lead me out, for I am very old.
When will the dawn of childhood come
Over the spirit, like a heaven-born light,
Breaking beneath the darkness of old age?
Why is it thus? Are frames less strong than wills?

JULIUS (*also just called*). You'd better ask those questions of the hills.

FIRST BENCHER. I have done so, sir, and vain it ever proves.

MACDONALD. Then, if the hills won't serve you, try the groves.

In "The Absurdities of a Day," by J. R. Planché, my father called attention to the "realism" of the stage, which, seemingly, was as much the fashion in 1844 as in 1887. The description of the scene might suit a modern "set" at a West-end theatre in the present day:—

"The stage represents a splendidly furnished drawing-room. There are two windows in the flat, each with a gilt cornice in the style of Louis Quatorze; the curtains are of satin damask, and there is a deep fringe over the top (this fringe must be exactly one foot in depth, for a good deal of the interest of the piece is wound up in it; the cornice must also be massive, for the incidents hang upon them). In the centre of the stage is a round table with gilt claws, and on the top is a light blue silk embroidered cover. Between the windows is a practicable mantelpiece, with a French clock upon it, which must strike the quarters; for it must be heard twice in the course of the scene, as there is a joke that

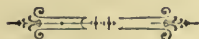
depends upon the striking of the clock twice within a quarter of an hour. On the table is a copy of the 'Court Journal,' the 'Book of Beauty' for last year, and a camellia japonica in a small Dresden china flower case. The carpet is a real Axminster, and a pier glass stands at the back of the clock, running from the bottom of the stage to the top, so that the heroine may see herself in it at full length, as her principal sentiment depends upon this effect being fully realised. The chairs are *en suite* with the curtains, the frames matching the cornices. There are several copies in alabaster of the Laocoon, the Venus de Medici, the Dying Gladiator, the Three Graces, and other well-known pieces of sculpture scattered about the room, which must be highly scented with eau de Cologne, so that the odour may reach the back row in the upper gallery. On the rising of the curtain Lady de Stanville is sitting with three spaniels of King Charles's breed toying at her feet; Lord de Stanville is eating a biscuit devilled in champagne, and Honoria de Stanville is playing the polka on a Broadwoods' piano."

It may not be inappropriate to bring my notes to a conclusion with my father's introduction to his travestie of his own piece, which, it is scarcely necessary to say, was a tissue of absurdity. It shall be my last quotation from the two volumes before me:—

"The extreme conciseness of this gentleman's style enables us to print his comedy entire; and when we see the wide range of subjects it embraces; the rough honesty of the tar; the recklessness of the libertine lord; the abiding endurance of the patient girl; the affectionate bluntness of her father, the Admiral; the merry promptness of the coxswain to indulge in one of those hornpipes which constitute the distinctive character of the British seaman—when we see so much genuine nature; such pathos, such a wholesome enthusiasm for English commerce, such a nice feeling for the peerage, which makes the libertine lord repent in the fourth act—when we see all this, we are only surprised that the comedy is in this collection instead of being acted on the boards of the Haymarket. Whether the fine and healthy tone of British sentiment, whether the well-turned compliments to the English merchant would have told in the present day of artificial institutions may be doubtful; but, with all respect for the Committee who rejected the 'School for Sentiment,' we think the experiment was worth trying. Perhaps Mr. Webster may yet be

tempted to cast a piece so evidently written with an eye to his present company."

To the last my father laughed at himself, and was the very antithesis to those who belong to the cynical school of dramatists which finds so much favour nowadays. This may be the reason why the following lines were written by Douglas Jerrold (who certainly was seldom accused of too much sentimentality) in the pages of "Punch" when my father died: "On the 30th of August, 1856, passed from among us a genial manly spirit, singularly gifted with the subtlest powers of wit and humour; faculties ever exercised by their possessor to the healthiest and most innocent purpose. On the Bench his firmness, moderation, and gentleness won him public respect, as they endeared him to all within their influence. His place knows him not; but his memory is tenderly cherished."



The Woman and the Law !

(A True Story told before Mr. Justice Hawkins at the recent Liverpool Assizes.
—Vide Daily Telegraph, Feb. 8.)

[From "PUNCH."]

IN the criminal dock stood a woman alone,
To be judged for her crime, her one fault to repair,
And the man who gave evidence sat like a stone,
With a look of contempt for the woman's despair !
For the man was a husband, who'd ruined a life,
And broken a heart he had found without flaw ;
He demanded the punishment due from the wife
Who was only a Woman ! whilst his was the Law !

A terrible silence then reigned in the Court,
And the eyes of humanity turned to the dock,
Her head was bent down, and her sobbing came short,
And the gaoler stood ready, with hand on the lock
Of the gate of despair, that would open no more
When this wreckage of beauty was hurried away !
"Let me speak," moaned the woman, "my Lord, I implore !"
"Yes, speak," said the Judge ; "I will hear what you say !"

"I was only a girl when he stole me away
From the home and the mother who loved me too well ;
But the shame, and the pain, I have borne since that day,
Not a pitying soul who now listens can tell !
There was never a promise he made but he broke ;
The bruises he gave I have covered with shame ;
Not a tear, not a pray'r, but he scorned as a joke !
He cursed at my children, and sneered at my fame !

"The money I'd slav'd for and hoarded, he'd rob ;
I have borne his reproaches when maddened with drink ;
For a man there is pleasure, for woman a sob ;
It is he who may slander, but she who must think.

But at last came the day when the Law gave release,
Just a moment of respite from merciless fate,
For they took him to prison, and purchased me peace,
Till I welcomed him home like a wife—at the gate!

“ Was it wrong in repentance of Man to believe ?
It is hard to forget, it is right to forgive !
But he struck me again, and he left me to grieve
For the love I had lost, for the life I must live !
So I silently stole from the depths of despair,
And slunk from dark destiny’s chastening rod,
And I crept to the light, and the life, and the air,
From the town of the man to the country of God !

“ ’Twas in solitude then that there came to my soul
The halo of comfort that sympathy casts—
He was strong, he was brave, and, though centuries roll,
I shall love that one man whilst eternity lasts !
Oh, my Lord, I was weak, I was wrong, I was poor !
I had suffered so much through my journey of life.
Hear ! the worst of the crime that is laid at my door—
I said I was widow, when really a wife.

“ Here I stand to be judg’d, in the sight of the man
Who from purity took a frail woman away.
Let him look in my face, if he dare, if he can !
Let him stand up on oath to deny what I say !
’Tis a story that many a wife can repeat,
From the day that the old curse of Eden began ;
In the dread name of Justice, look down from your seat,
Come ! sentence the Woman, and shelter the Man ! ”

A silence more terrible reigned than before,
For the lip of the coward was cruelly curled ;
But the hand of the gaoler slipped down from the door
Made to shut this sad wanderer out from the world !
Said the Judge, “ My poor woman, now listen to me !
Not one hour you shall stray from humanity’s heart !
When thirty swift minutes have sped you are free !
In the name of the Law—which is Mercy—depart ! ”

C. S.

Our Musical=Box.

A CONTRIBUTION, no less valuable than entertaining, to musical literature has recently been supplied by that learned critic and genial writer, Mr. W. A. Barrett, Her Majesty's Assistant Inspector of Music, in the shape of two lectures upon the "Comic Songs of England," delivered by him last month at the London Institution. Mr. Barrett deals with the subject of his discourses exhaustively, recording the phases through which the association of popular melody with humorous verse has passed from the close of the twelfth century down to the present day, and illustrating each period of transition with specimen lyrics, many of which throw considerable light on the domestic habits and political tendencies of the English people at different periods of its history. With profound erudition, rendered palatable and digestible to his readers by vivacity of style and a happy vein of anecdote, he traverses seven centuries of comic song, making us acquainted with all the laughing lyrists of our native country from Walter de Mapes to the music-hall bards of the present day, and with typical ditties of their composition, ranging between the monkish Bacchanalian, "I intend to end my days In a tavern drinking," and the latest ebullition of cockney vulgarity, let us say, "Oh! what a surprise, Two bally black eyes." Some of the original settings of the more ancient songs, which Mr. Barrett has contrived to rescue from oblivion in the course of long and painstaking research, are extremely quaint, their grave simplicity offering a curious contrast to the laboured joviality of latter-day comic lays. In the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries the writers of humorous songs relied exclusively upon the quips and cranks embodied in their words to provoke laughter, and made no attempt to force fun into their tunes. The melody of "Mihi est propositum," for instance, would serve for a penitential psalm; but the humour of its text doubtless caused many a mediæval scholar to shake his sides over the learned toper's euthanasian project. Interesting specimens of comic songs that were popular in the early and late Plantagenet days are "The Man in the Moon," "The Tournament of Tottenham," and "London Lackpenny." Characteristic of the tastes of the people for whom all these lays were written is the fact that twelve per cent. of the musical illustrations to Mr. Barrett's delightful lectures have Ale for their theme. The first of these beery ballads is dated 1430, the last 1780. The examples also include songs in dialect, cockney and provincial, character-songs and patter-songs—Hudson's once famous "Tripe on a Friday," Horace Smith's "Guy Fawkes," Beuler's "Tea in the Arbour," with which London streets were only too familiar half-a-

century ago, Hood's immortal "Lieutenant Luff," and one or two of Henry S. Leigh's inimitable topsyturvy lyrics.

At the second of his Vocal Recitals (winter season) Mr. De Lara introduced several novelties to a fashionable audience, which received his latest compositions, as well as those of Mrs. Moncrieff and Mr. Hervey, with marked favour. Amongst the new songs sung by the concert-giver for the first time in public, two, in particular, displayed musical merit of a very high order. These were "After Silent Tears" (De Lara—Lytton), in which a genuinely pathetic melody is wedded to verse of singular beauty and tenderness, and "In Arcady" (Hervey—Toynbee), a sentimental ballad fully worthy of the composer of "Heart of my Heart"; I can accord to it no higher praise. Some part-songs from Owen Meredith's "Orval," recently set by De Lara, were pleasantly rendered by the choir of young ladies which owns his sway. At Mr. Henschel's orchestral concert, given on February 15, the greater part of the programme was devoted to selections from Wagner's operatic works, with which Hans Richter has already familiarised the musical public of this metropolis. One Wagnerian novelty, however—at least it was so to me—lent exceptional interest to the evening's entertainment. It was an elaborate study in tone-colour, having relation to Wagner's favourite operatic subject, "Tristan and Isolde," containing striking and attractive instrumental effects, such as the combination of open strings and *corde alla sordina*, as well as that of a string octett with horns, bassoons, and clarionets, both singularly captivating exemplars of the poetry of sound, and admirably interpreted by Mr. Henschel's excellent orchestra. Mr. Schoeneberger's second pianoforte recital drew a numerous and exceptionally musical audience to St. James's Hall on the 16th ult., and afforded to the "smaller Rubinstein"—as Joseph Bennett has aptly designated the young Madrid professor—an opportunity of confirming the estimate of his merits and shortcomings formed by the more knowledgeable of his hearers on a previous occasion. In the matter of *technique*, Mr. Schoeneberger again proved that he has nothing to learn—indeed, that he has learnt too much, for his mastery of mere manipulation betrays him into executant extravagances that are intensely distressful to the cultured ear and the refined taste. The liberties he takes with the *tempi* and expressed intentions of great classical composers too often degenerate into unpardonable license. On the other hand, his playing is at times characterised by such exquisite delicacy of treatment, intensity of feeling and refinement of interpretation, that it would be impossible not to recognise him as a pianist of extraordinary gifts and splendid capabilities. In every work of importance performed by him at his second concert the contrasts between his excellences and offences were strongly marked, most conspicuously so in Mendelssohn's "Variations Sérieuses," some of which he rendered irreproachably and some no less erroneously, and in Schubert's glorious A minor Sonata (op. 42), the first two movements of which could not have been more daintily and tenderly played, whilst the Scherzo and Rondo were

scrambled through with unpardonable haste and incoherence. It is a pity that Mr. Schoeneberger is so inveterately addicted to sensationalism in playing—to alternating *fortissimi* and *pianissimi*, exaggerated emphasis, extravagance of accentuation, and, above all, to unnatural *accelerandi*—all *ad captandum* tricks unworthy of an accomplished musician and superb executant, both of which he undoubtedly is. A pianist who can play Schumann's "Fantasiestuecke" and Henselt's "Petite Valse" with the poetical feeling and perfection of finish displayed by Mr. Schoeneberger in his interpretation of these fanciful works should never condescend to cater for the groundlings by lending his great talents to the production of vulgar effects. Claiming to be counted amongst his sincerest admirers, I venture to express the hope that he will rid his playing of the excrescences which at present deface it. Should he do so, a career of supreme utility and distinction is before him.

On the 22nd ult., Mr. Hayden Coffin entertained his friends, whose name is legion, at the Lyric Club, with music and recitations, diluted by tea and coffee, and tempered by ices and pasticceria. There was a great gathering of composers and critics, managers and music-publishers, dainty dames and damozels, artists and authors, concert-room and comic-opera stars of various magnitudes, green-room gossips and fashionable flaneurs. Aided by several fellow-songsters of both sexes, all well known to fame, the justly popular young American baritone entertained his guests profusely with concords of sweet sounds, whilst canary-coloured nymphs meandered hither and thither, proffering refreshments to dilettanti unnumbered, rarely in vain—for singing and declaiming are notoriously thirsty work to listeners as well as performers. Mr. Coffin not only sang delightfully, "his custom always of an afternoon" as well as of an evening, but played the host to perfection. Success has not turned his head or spoilt his manners, which are excellent; and it is no wonder that good looks, modesty of demeanour, and unaffected cheerfulness should have secured to him the good suffrages of society as well as high favour with the general public.

"Nordisa," Mr. Corder's three-act opera, composed expressly for the Carl Rosa Company, has scored an enormous success at Liverpool, where it was originally brought out with a strong cast, picturesque scenery, pretty dresses, and a "mechanical effect" of a novel description, which has been described to me as "powerful enough to bear a much less able work than 'Nordisa' on its shoulders to the topmost heights of popularity." Mr. Black's avalanche, it appears, carried everything before it at the *première*—the audience as well as the stage properties of the "set" over which it rolled with resistless might—and has continued to do so to the delight of crowded houses at each succeeding representation of the opera. The Liverpudlians have displayed their sense of obligation to Mr. Rosa for the compliment which he paid to them by producing so

important a novelty as "Nordisa" in their city, instead of in the metropolis, by thronging his theatre again and again, enabling him to close his box-office for the better part of a week (all the numbered places having been sold in advance), and filling his treasury with valuable effigies of our gracious Queen. I can say nothing about the music of "Nordisa," not having been fortunate enough to hear a note of it as yet; but I have great pleasure in recording the fact that an almost unanimously favourable verdict has been pronounced upon it by the musical critics of the leading metropolitan and provincial journals. With respect to the performance in Liverpool, I am told by friends who have witnessed it, and upon whose judgment I can rely, that Mesdames Burns and Gaylord sang and acted surpassingly well as Minna and Nordisa; that Mr. Eugene distinguished himself both as singer and actor in the "heavy" part of Andreas Brand; that Mr. Sauvage was a thoroughly efficient Frederick Hansen; and that the part of Count Oscar by no means suited Mr. Scovel, who, it is said, will not be called upon to sustain it in London. To whom will Mr. Rosa confide this important rôle, if, as I hear from more than one quarter, Mr. McGuckin's engagement with the English Opera Company should definitely terminate at Easter? Where is the robust tenor, trained to stage usances, who is capable of supplying the void that this artiste's secession would leave in the foremost rank of Mr. Rosa's array of vocalists? The difference which seems likely to lead to Mr. McGuckin's secession from a flag under which he has served with credit to himself, advantage to his *impresa*, and gratification to the musical public, is greatly to be deplored by everybody interested in the prosperity of the Carl Rosa company. Its probable result cannot but materially inconvenience both persons chiefly concerned; for Mr. Rosa will lose a valuable member of his *troupe*, and Mr. McGuckin will experience considerable difficulty in employing his talents as fitly and remuneratively as he has done for some years past. It will, moreover, be uncommonly hard on the admirers and supporters of English Opera to be deprived of Mr. McGuckin's services—a calamity of no small moment, though happily not irretrievable, like that which befel them last year, when the lamented Joseph Maas was prematurely stricken down at the very zenith of his splendid career. It is to be hoped, in the public interest as well as his own, that our leading dramatic tenor will see reason to return to his allegiance, and that the infelicitous episode above alluded to will terminate in the complete reconciliation of two excellent public servants, each of whom is equally necessary to the other, whilst both are entitled to the gratitude and esteem of every English music-lover.

From the formidable pile of vocal music transmitted to me during the past month I have selected four highly noteworthy songs for especial mention. Signor Paolo Tosti's "Marina" (words by Carmelo Errico) is one of that sympathetic melodist's most elaborate compositions, revealing a command of the resources of harmony possessed by few Italian song-writers of the present day. It was evidently written when Signor

Tosti was in a Wagnerian frame of mind, prompting him to try his hand at an experiment in tone-colour. His intrinsic and unconquerable tune-fulness, however, asserts itself triumphantly in the closing episode of the song, which concludes with the touching simplicity that characterises so many of Signor Tosti's musical periphrases. "Minor Cadences," by Mr. Percy Reeve, is a charming drawing-room lyric—one of those unaffectedly tender lays that the singer lingers over and the hearer asks for again. The true pathos of Mr. Payne's beautiful verses has communicated itself to Mr. Reeve's sweet music. Both the above-mentioned songs are published by Signor Tito Ricordi, of Regent Street, as is a delightful setting of Algernon Swinburne's "Love at Sea," also by the composer of "Minor Cadences." A third song by Mr. Reeve, "Like the Dove" (Joseph Williams), deserves high praise for its clever construction and Schumannesque fervour. As it is by no means easy to sing or to accompany, it may possibly find less favour with the "society" vocalists than with the concert-room artiste; but all cultivated musicians will recognise in it a work of conspicuous merits. By the way, Mr. Reeve is a humorist as well as a composer. I have lately read a booklet of his, hight "After the Honeymoon," than which Max Adeler never wrote anything more exuberantly funny. There is laughter enough in it to fatten a shadow, which is the thinnest person I can think of. Mr. George Beddie has written a melodious, taking waltz (Willcocks and Co.), the title page of which illustrates an ingenious "new departure" in the frontispiece line. It depicts a handsome proscenium with footlights, a section of "the boards," and the appliances for "making-up," the curtain being a broad sheet of theatrical and literary advertisements. "The Stage" is a real dancing waltz, and as such I confidently recommend it to ball-rooms, instrumentalists, and "trippists" on the light fantastic toe.

CLAVICHORD.

"NORDISA,"

A Romantic Opera, in three acts, written and composed by F. CORDER.
Produced by the Carl Rosa Opera company at the Court Theatre, Liverpool,
on Wednesday, January 26, 1887.

Count Oscar Lydal	Mr. EDWARD SCOVEL.	A young Shepherd	Miss VADINI.
Lieut. Frederick Hansen...	Mr. J. SAUVAGE.	Baroness Nymark	Mrs. HENRY POPE.
Andreas Brand	Mr. MAX EUGENE.	Minna	Mme. GEORGINA BURNS.
Halvor	Mr. AYNLEY COOK.	Nordisa	Mme. JULIA GAYLORD.
Paster	Mr. HENRY POPE.	Margit	Miss KATE DREW.

If the verdict of Liverpool may be taken as an indication of that which is to be pronounced at the other musical centres of the kingdom, "Nordisa" can without hesitation be described as the most successful opera yet written for the Carl Rosa company. Produced in the middle of the six weeks' season held by that troupe in the Lancashire city, the new work was performed there no fewer than eight times, and on each occasion before enthusiastic audiences that filled the Court Theatre to its utmost capacity. Making allowance for the parental pride felt by Liverpoolians in an opera which was permitted to see light for the first time in their midst, and thus mark a new epoch in their musical annals,

I am still inclined to think that the measure of favour bestowed by them upon "Nordisa" was the outcome of a palpable liking for the work. Indeed, it is wanting in none of the elements calculated to take the general fancy. 'After several essays in other branches of his art, Mr. Corder found himself, thanks to Mr. Carl Rosa, in the fortunate position of being able to appeal to his musical countrymen by the most striking and comprehensive of all forms of lyrical composition—an opera, and he determined to make therewith a bold bid for popularity. He would not write to please one class, but every class of opera-lovers; and, if this could not be accomplished by adopting a single style, he would adopt three or four. At all risks, there must be a *bonne bouche* to tickle each palate in turn, and leave none untickled. Hence the one eye for art and the other for business that look out of most of the pages of Mr. Corder's score; hence an *omnium gatherum* of methods and materials at once daring, remarkable, and successful. To say that there is no suspicion of incongruity about a mixture which brings Wagner and Balfe into association would be untrue; but so deftly is it managed, so carefully are abrupt contrasts avoided, that the general effect, even upon connoisseurs—provided they are not inclined to be hypercritical—is that of a tolerably consistent and harmonious whole.

The fact of his being his own librettist was of enormous advantage to Mr. Corder. It enabled him, not only to keep his general purpose in view when laying down the plan of his work, but to make with facility such alterations as suggested themselves when the result of his labours came to be put to a practical test. The old French play, "La Bergère des Alpes," supplies the main fabric of the story of "Nordisa," the scene being transferred from Switzerland to Norway, and the period fixed at 1750. It is a story abounding with picturesque incident and well off for effective situations—qualities so essential to an operatic libretto that the improbability, nay, absurdity, of many points has perforce to be pardoned. We take for granted, but of course no one regards as credible, the leading motive of the plot, namely, that at the approach of winter the Norwegian mountain shepherds come down into the valley and send up to take their place and tend their cattle a young and tender maiden. Yet, preposterous though it be, the idea serves its purpose well enough. It creates in Nordisa a sympathetic heroine, filled with simple devotion; it gives rise to the picturesque ceremonies connected with her departure from the village and installation in her mountain chalet, or *sætar*; it renders possible a prolonged love scene between Nordisa and the Count Oscar amid the lonely, rugged surroundings of wild Norwegian hills; it even affords occasion for a stupendous scenic effect in the shape of an avalanche, which falls just outside the *sætar* and therein engages the lovers, who are supposed to reside together as sister and brother until the warmth of returning spring melts the snowy bars of their prison-house. All this is very effective and certainly much less conventional than the business relating to Andreas Brand's search for his long-lost child and the discovery that Nordisa, having been

exchanged in infancy for her foster-sister, Minna, is in reality the daughter of the Baroness Nymark. But, despite a hackneyed *dénouement*, the libretto must, on the whole, be accounted above the average. It may, as Mr. Corder acknowledges, be constructed on old-fashioned lines, but it has many redeeming qualities that old opera books did not often possess.

If asked to describe the music of "Nordisa" in the simplest possible manner, I should classify it under three heads—(1) the music which imparts "local colour" to the opera; (2) that intended to catch the popular ear; and (3) that in which the composer has sought, in the manner most congenial to him, to do the fullest justice to the dramatic situation. The last section is only exemplified in the scene between Nordisa and Oscar already referred to; and this extremely fine duet, which occupies the greater portion of the second act, helps, by its impassioned beauty and well-sustained power, to raise the artistic standard of the entire opera. Essentially Wagnerian in character, it demands the highest qualities of declamatory art, and, vouchsafed this, I will answer for its effect on any lyric stage. As regards "local colour," the composer admits his indebtedness for three actual Norwegian melodies. The rest is imitated, and remarkably cleverly imitated, too. Whenever introduced, Mr. Corder's *couleur locale* lends an appropriate and picturesque charm that is distinctly welcome. It is employed with most liberality in the first act (which, by the way, I found too long at Liverpool); notably in a melodious "Cradle-song" for Minna, in the choruses, and in some exceedingly tuneful, characteristic ballet-music. Now, with reference to the second of the above-mentioned categories, be it understood that Mr. Corder, in making his bid for popularity, descends only in one or two instances to the level of commonplace. There is only a single number in the opera—a ballad for the baritone in the last act—that is positively unworthy its place in the score. Elsewhere the endeavour to be simple and pleasing may have resulted in unmistakable reminiscences of this composer or that, but there is a distinction and feeling about Mr. Corder's treatment of his voices and orchestra which rarely fails to impress the cultivated musician at the same time that the ear of the ordinary listener is being agreeably entertained. I may instance, as examples of this happy combination, the striking bass air, "Scent of the pine," and Nordisa's air, "The first faint flakes," with its intensely fervent and expressive refrain, "God is everywhere," a beautiful strain of melody subsequently often heard in course of the opera. The *ensembles* are mostly constructed with skill and knowledge of effect, while the instrumentation is replete with colour and fancy. In fine, the composer's plan has thoroughly succeeded; he has produced in "Nordisa" an opera which, whilst doing him infinite credit, seems likely to win favour all round. Notice of the Carl Foss performance may fitly be left until the production of "Nordisa" at Drury Lane in May.

HERMANN KLEIN.

"MYNHEER JAN."

Comic Opera in Three Acts, by H. PAULTON and M. TEDDE. Music by E. JARONOWSKI.

Produced, for the first time in London, at the Comedy Theatre, on Monday, February 14, 1887.

Conductor, M. AUGUSTE VAN BIESE.

General Bombalo	Mr. DE LANGE.	Donna Tralara... ..	Madame AMADI.
Francis Bombalo	Mr. TAPLEY.	Camilla	Miss MELNOTTE.
Don Diego	Mr. HARCOURT.	Gretchen	Miss MUNROE.
Hans	Mr. PAULTON.	Katrine	Miss D'ARVILLE.
Karl	Mr. WYATT.	Paquita	Miss LETHBRIDGE.

Mynheer Jan is a myth; it is therefore perhaps a subtle exemplification of the "unities" which so seldom have anything to do with comic opera, that a work of that class, bearing his name, should be devoid of a plot as well as of a hero. The absence of both from the Comedy novelty proves just a thought puzzling to its audiences, if I may venture to appraise its effect upon others by that which it produced upon myself. But pretty music, good singing, picturesque scenery, and gorgeous costumes go a long way towards compensating the average theatre-goer for any mental confusion he may suffer in the course of an earnest endeavour, persisted in throughout three longish acts, to make out what on earth and under heaven "Mynheer Jan" can possibly be about. As the principal characters run aimlessly up and down the stage, darting now and then into the wings for no manifest purpose, and re-appearing from unexpected quarters with no avowed or subsequently developed object, perplexity is succeeded by bewilderment, bewilderment by amazement, and amazement by despair. The dialogue rarely throws light on the action, but it is a sort of colloquial Will-o'-the-Wisp, bobbing about in a manner that is always eccentric and sometimes insensate, misleading the trustful listener into quagmires of misapprehension, and never once guiding him to the wished-for logical goal which he wildly struggles to attain. Those intending to witness a performance of "Mynheer Jan," if they wish to pass their evening at the Comedy Theatre in unmarred enjoyment, will do well to devote their ears to the music, which is charming, and their eyes to the *mise en scène*, which is in every respect admirable, foregoing any attempt to understand the story or to unravel the explanatory tangles of the dialogue. That way madness lies! Moreover, the "book" of this opera is not funny. Mr. Paulton has manifestly spared no pains to make it so, but with less success than has attended his former efforts in connection with comic libretti. His curiously dry humour and laborious word-plays, when expounded by himself with the grim inflexibility that characterises his delivery and gestures alike, rarely fail to provoke laughter—rather by the extrinsic quaintness of their manner than by the intrinsic ludicrousness of their matter. When entrusted to persons, however, gifted with a less pronounced individuality than his own, they are apt to fall flat—as they do, for the most part, in "Mynheer Jan." Even so brilliant a *bouffe* actor as Mr. Wyatt, whose exuberant spirit and grotesque

antics have moved me to ungovernable mirth times without number, and so intelligent a comedian as Mr. De Lange, who never misses a point or fails to speak the words confided to him with just and discreet emphasis, are visibly crushed by the weight of the parts allotted to them in this incomprehensible work. So are Mr. Harcourt—who was extremely funny as the exhausted Duke of Somewhere, in the “Bearnaise”—Madame Amadi, one of our brightest comic actresses, and Miss Munroe, whose sparkling gaiety and irrepressible *verve* are proverbial amongst the patrons of operetta. Neither Miss D’Arville nor Miss Melnotte is endowed with the *vis comica*. These ladies’ respective rôles in “Mynheer Jan,” therefore, suited them both very well.

Turning from Messrs. Paulton and Tedde’s share in the new opera to that of M. Jakobowski, I have nothing but praise to bestow upon the uniformly agreeable music which that talented composer has fitted to a singularly unsympathetic libretto. There is not a single ugly number in the whole score; from first to last all is tuneful, graceful, and musicianly. Among the numbers that struck me as of more than average attractiveness are a concerted piece hight “Obedience,” and teeming with clever contrivances; the melodious love-duet for soprano and tenor, “Can a parent’s mind”; the vigorous and well-constructed *finale* of Act I., “Some one must know”; the dainty *barcarolle* with which Act II. opens; a comic dancing-*duo* for mezzo-soprano and bass, called “In days gone by,” instinct with old-fashioned musical stateliness; a really beautiful tenor-song, “Her love is Mine,” and no less charming soprano solo, intituled “Love’s a King”; the unaccompanied chorus, “Hail, setting sun,” a gem of price; and the sailor’s chorus, “We’re tars all true,” the music of which is as inspiring as its words are mystery-fraught and, consequently, depressing.

The vocal rendering of the pleasant compositions above cited was—at least, when I heard it—all but unexceptionable. Miss D’Arville sang superbly throughout the evening—I use the term advisedly. Her voice-production and intonation really left nothing to be desired. There is no more able and effective songstress than she on the comic-operatic stage. She has, indeed, splendidly fulfilled the promise she held out when I first heard her in the title-rôle of “Cymbia” a few years ago, and recorded the excellence of her achievements in the pages of this magazine. Madame Amadi, although her part is unworthy of her talents, fully maintained her well-earned renown as an accomplished vocalist and humorous actress. Mr. Tapley delighted his hearers by a remarkably tasteful and discreet display of a sweet voice, possessing the true tenor quality; while Mr. De Lange sang, as he acted, carefully, correctly, and conscientiously. The singing of Messrs. Paulton, Wyatt, and Harcourt calls for no special mention, save in acknowledgment of the fact that all three did their duty manfully in the concerted music. If enthusiastic applause be a fair

criterion of success, the dancing of a wild *saltarello* by Miss Alice Lethbridge—a delicate-looking but singularly lithesome and active girl—was the “great go” of the performance at which I was present. The young lady in question leapt and twirled like one possessed, and was rewarded for her graceful impetuosity by a double recall. All the chorus-singing was excellent, as were the feats of the orchestra, admirably conducted by its gifted *chef*, M. Auguste van Biene. Pretty faces and shapely limbs abounded amongst the supernumeraries of the softer sex, whom M. and Madame Alias had dressed—or should I more correctly say undressed?—in costumes exhibiting delightful combinations of colour as well as the exiguity of costly material that meets the view of the steadfast patrons of comic opera nowadays. A good deal of earnest archæological research is evinced in the dressing of the characters in “Mynheer Jan,” which, on the whole, is as pretty to look at as it is agreeable to listen to, and, therefore, has sound and indefeasible claims to the popularity which, as I am assured, it has already obtained. Those who “ought to know” tell me that it is drawing crowded houses nightly. Long may it continue to do so!

CLAVICHORD.



Our Play-Box.

“AFTER LONG YEARS.”

A new Comedy-Drama, in three acts, the story by Mrs. HERBERT PURVIS,
the construction and dialogue by ARTHUR LAW.

Produced, for the first time in London, at the Criterion Theatre, on Wednesday afternoon,
February 2, 1887.

Philip Cunningham...	Mr. J. G. GRAHAM.	Alice Cunningham...	Miss ADEL MEASOR.
Harry Cunningham...	Mr. YORKE STEPHENS.	Jenny Primrose ...	Miss VANE FEATHERSTONE.
Senor Ricardo ...	Mr. STEPHEN CAFFREY.	Meadows ...	Miss INA GARRICK.
Sir Frederick Goodchild...	Mr. MATTHEW BRODIE.	Margaret Cunningham...	Miss DE GREY.
Mrs. Sheppard ...	Mrs. ERNEST CLIFTON.		

Any similarity in this piece to another which had a successful course at the Princess's was rather anxiously deprecated by the author previous to the performance. The story, however, proved to be much the same, turning in both on the futility (in a legal sense) of a Scotch marriage, and offering an unprecedented display of villany on the part of the husband, who yet, in some respects, appeared to be an amiable sort of man. He snatches the precious certificate from his wife; he tears it up and burns it before her eyes; then marries again, and has a charming daughter, with whom falls in love no less a person than his own son, an engaging little child at the time of the destruction of the certificate. This is sadly awkward and disagreeable, especially as the young girl is on the point of dying of her passion. Still, the depraved father will not speak; refuses his consent for obvious reasons, though appealed to by all his family and the faithful maid. Will he not save her life? But during a paroxysm, when the poor girl has fainted right off,

the better instinct prevails. "She is not my child!" he exclaims; "the mother and child are both dead, but *this* is the offspring of a gipsy, whom I adopted," or words to some such effect. There was much surprise among the audience at this announcement, but all was made up and ended happily. Mr. Law is a practised writer, and in parts is effective; but he was fettered by this odd story, which, it seems, was supplied by "Mrs. Herbert Purvis." There are some strange things: such, for instance, as the rich Brazilian merchant, who lost the use of his legs in a rather undignified way—an omnibus accident—and when asked, would he not go for damages, good-humouredly protests that he has damages enough already. The engaging child before alluded to, while full of pleasant 'pranks, hiding from papa under the table, &c., did not utter a single word during the whole act! When it grew up to man's estate in the person of Mr. Yorke Stephens it was loquacious enough. Another oddity was that the Mr. Graham of the play was enacted by the well-known Mr. Grahame of the stage. The acting was good, Miss de Grey playing with practised effect, delivering her "lines" with much fluency and point: occasionally she showed power. Miss Measor, as the lovesick maiden, was pathetic; and Miss V. Featherstone singularly sprightly, bringing gaiety with her when she came on the scene.

"SHE WOU'D AND SHE WOU'D NOT."

Colley Cibber's comedy (first produced in 1703).

Acted at the Strand Theatre, on Thursday afternoon, February 3, 1887.

Don Manuel... ..	Mr. CHARLES DODSWORTH.	Pedro	Mr. P. R. MACNAMARA.
Don Philip	Mr. W. H. DAY.	Corrigidore	Mr. HENRY.
Don Luis	Mr. JOHN NESBITT.	Rosara	Miss MADGE SHIRLEY.
Octavio	Mr. ARTHUR LEWIS.	Violetta	Miss LOTTIE HARCOURT.
Trappanti	Mr. COMPTON COUTTS.	Flora... ..	Miss TILBURY.
Sotto	Mr. W. P. STIRLING.	Hypollita	Miss AGNES HEWITT.
Sancho... ..	Mr. EARDLEY TURNER.		

Miss Agnes Hewitt, who, like the French, seems determined to "make a pact with victory," has appeared in another of the old comedies (now so much in fashion), to wit, Colley Cibber's sprightly "She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not." Some personal predilection might have dictated this choice, as the piece, like "The Country Girl," offers tempting opportunity for the display of female charms in male attire. A "breeches part," as it is called, has always been coveted, even by those whom it does not become, in which category Miss Hewitt cannot be classed. She has much to learn—she rather lacks force and training—but she shows evidence of purpose and dramatic instinct. A few years' "grinding" in the country—education, in short—is what is wanted. This well-crusted piece needs the best acting, and to be what has been called "bustled through;" but here it seemed rather to have hobbled along. Yet it was a pleasure to listen to its wit and lively dialogue. Miss Shirley's Violetta was pleasing and interesting, because it had proper sentiment and grace; and her maid, by Miss Harcourt, though played rather too much *à l'Américaine*, was amusing. Mr. Dodsworth, as the irascible Don Manuel, sadly over-acted; but as the over-acted portions

awakened bursts of applause, which stimulated further efforts, we may presume that the aim was attained. Trappanti, the pert valet, was badly acted. He should be in the hands of a low comedian, and not rendered in a prim, "perking" style.

Our Omnibus-Box.

My play-going has led me to many pleasant places in the course of the year—seldom to a town more picturesque than the old-world town of Beaconsfield, in the county of Bucks. Fancy the delight of exchanging the fogs and gloom of the Strand, the blanket of depression that half smothers miserable London in mid-February, for the frosty lanes, the bright glistening hedges, the woods spangled with hoar-frost, and the peace of contentment that is found in the lovely county sacred to the memory of John Milton and Edmund Burke, and the Court poet, Edmund Waller. In lovely Hall Barn, where Waller lived, in years gone by, among its woods and groves and stately terraces, a rare old English home and princely pleasure-house, dwells the High Sheriff of the County, Mr. Edward L. Lawson, with his amiable and hospitable family, one of whose members, his eldest son, entered Parliament almost as young as the poet Waller himself. Among Mr. Edward Lawson's benefactions to Beaconsfield is a recreation hall, built in a meadow, that he has dedicated to the town. In this cosy corner a very pretty theatre has been erected, one that for comfort, convenience, and elegance would not disgrace many a provincial town. In the hall, from time to time, concerts, dramatic performances, lectures, and public meetings are held, and they are vastly appreciated, not only by the townsfolk, but all the district round that includes the busy manufacturing place of wooden chairs, namely, High Wycombe.

Recently, for the benefit of a local charity, the residents and guests at Hall Barn gave a very admirable dramatic performance that certainly deserves mention, so far superior was it to the ordinary run of plays acted by amateurs, however clever. The first item on the generous programme was a little comedietta, called "Tears," written by Mr. B. C. Stephenson, and never yet performed on the regular stage, though it ought to be. Founded on a French romance, "Les Femmes qui Pleurent," it would make a capital commencement to an evening's entertainment. The first honours of the comedietta were easily borne off by Mrs. Lawson, who proved herself to be a comedy actress of great distinction and taste. Easy and natural, with a charming voice and a winning manner, Mrs. Lawson gave an excellent idea of that high comedy that is disappearing so fast from the regular stage. Natural herself, she put everyone else

at their ease, and was frequently applauded for her sallies of womanly wit and clever tact. Mrs. H. W. Lawson was a charming and lovable Lady Ainslie; and no wonder she moved to repentance her amiable husband, Sir Francis, who was completely conquered by her silent persuasiveness. Mr. H. W. Lawson played with earnestness and much eloquent power. Mr. Augustus Spalding is an "old stager," and on this occasion he took the character of Gerald Vivian, usually associated with that excellent actor, Captain Gooch. He was confident and clever, and very well received. A bright little performance of the French waiter by Mr. Southard Gilbey completed this excellent cast.

But if there were tears to reward the success of the comedietta, there was much laughter to follow over "Cool as a Cucumber," the well-known old Charles Mathews's farce, that he played at the Variétés in Paris, under the name of "L'Anglais Timide." Mr. Augustus Spalding has played Plumper times out of number, and, having been an intimate friend of the late Charles Mathews, and studied his business and manner, has come to be regarded by his friends as the legitimate successor of that admirable comedian. Indeed, it is reported of Mr. Spalding that so great is his enthusiasm over this farce that he once amused the passengers on board a steamer bound for Cairo by playing every character in "Cool as a Cucumber," sitting on a chair in the saloon—a kind of monopolylogue version of a rattling farce. However that may be, it is a question whether the amateur stage has ever given us a more amusing "Old Barkins" than Mr. Lawson. Made up so wonderfully that his dearest friend would not know him, providing clever business, asides, and "gags" of his own, Mr. Lawson convulsed the audience with laughter. It was really an admirably original and truly comic performance, and the High Sheriff was the hero of the occasion. Mr. W. Lawson and his popular sister, Miss Lawson, were very amusing in the often-despised rôles of Frederic Barkins and Jessie Honiton, their improvised business causing immense laughter; and Miss Agnes Gilbey was both clever and convincing as Wiggins, the maid-servant, who objects to be kissed by the irrepressible Plumper. The interval was well filled up with some admirable comic singing by Mr. Eustace Ponsonby, who introduced "Two Lovely Black Eyes" to the rustics of Beaconsfield, and was voted one of the successes of the evening. He brought down the gallery. Playing and singing by Miss Talbot and Miss Stafford Copeland, who delighted an audience as appreciative as it was large, and the unselfish efforts of the "Hall Barn Party" succeeded in amusing hundreds of their neighbours on two evenings.

The recital by Mr. Henry Irving of the play of "Hamlet" on Ash Wednesday evening, for the benefit of the Birkbeck Institution

Chancery Lane, is one of the most remarkable intellectual achievements that has hitherto been placed to the credit of this famous actor. Only those present can bear witness to the manner in which he seemed to draw out of his audience all the energy of thought that they possessed. He absolutely riveted their attention for close upon three hours, and gave such an idea of this sublime tragedy as few of them could have conceived or imagined to be possible. The beauty of Mr. Irving's conception of Hamlet is already well known; but on this occasion, undisturbed by stage glitter, pomp, and panoply, the auditors were able to drink in the full essence of the idea and to enjoy its subtler shades and intense mental colouring. Seldom has a Hamlet more human, more lovable, more reverential, or more sensitively imaginative been presented to Shakespearian students. In certain scenes the actor was positively rapt, and his countenance was lighted up with a beauty of intellectual fervour that was especially striking. Such a hold upon the audience did Mr. Irving possess that, notwithstanding the length of the recital and the strain on the nerves of those who listened, there was, for at least a minute or so, at the conclusion a solemn hush of silence. The book was closed, the play was over; but no one felt inclined to move or speak. The actor had awed his audience into a reverential attitude that was truly remarkable. Literally at that moment you might have heard a pin drop. The spirit of Shakespeare seemed to have descended into the room and to be hovering about the scene.

Unlike most reciters of Hamlet, Mr. Irving did not reserve his whole intellectual force for the Prince of Denmark. He showed not only that he could act every character in the play, but he could give to them a special grace and meaning. At last the beautiful character of Horatio has been mastered, and put before us in its most tender and human light. The dialogues between Hamlet and Horatio are inexpressibly beautiful; the friendship between the men seemed to be like that older companionship so sweet that it was literally "passing the love of women." There was a positive stir of emotion as Hamlet, leaning in fancy on his "own familiar friend," said these beautiful words with consummate tenderness:—"We defy augury; there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow! If it be now 'tis not to come: if it be not to come it will be now: if it be not now yet it will come: *the readiness is all!*" And the King, also, was a fine, original, and new idea. Mr. Irving made him just the winning, handsome, thoughtless man who would attract a Gertrude, a woman who on the whole preferred physical to mental attractions. And the Ghost, Polonius, the Gravedigger, Laertes, all contributed new ideas to the play of "Hamlet," and one would have thought might have interested such Shakespearian students as are on the stage and who may possibly follow Mr. Irving's footsteps. Mr. Beerbohm-Tree was about the only actor who cared to come and hear this remarkable recital. But then he is a student and an artist.

Our photographic portraits this month represent Miss Amy Roselle, one of our best and most experienced emotional actresses, and Mr. Brandon Thomas, a capital comedian and a dramatic writer of considerable promise. The first professional appearance of Mr. Brandon Thomas was made at the Court Theatre on April 19, 1879, under the management of Mr. John Hare, as Sandy, the Scotch soldier, in "The Queen's Shilling." Mr. Thomas then went with Mr. Hare and Mr. W. H. Kendal to the St. James's Theatre, where he remained, playing several small parts, until July, 1885. The vacations which occurred during this long engagement were spent by Mr. Thomas with small travelling companies, valuable experience being thus gained. In August of the year last mentioned, Mr. Thomas went with Miss Rosina Vokes to America, where he gained very great success in comedy and character parts. On his return to London last summer he was engaged for a small part in "Harvest," at the Princess's Theatre, and ultimately, on Mr. C. H. Hawtrey being unable to obtain the services of Mr. Bancroft, he was entrusted with the important part of Tressider, which he acted with skill and success. Mr. Thomas wrote, in collaboration with Mr. B. C. Stephenson, the comedy of "Comrades," produced at the Court Theatre on December 16, 1882, and he is the author of "The Colour-Sergeant," a clever, pathetic one-act play, brought out at the Princess's Theatre by Mr. Wilson Barrett on April 26, 1885. Mr. Thomas also assisted in the adaptation of "The Lodgers," which was represented at the Globe Theatre on January 18 last.

Among the many novelties recently produced, the little first piece at the Royalty Theatre, under the title of "The Coming Clown," is one of the best, and certainly serves as a vehicle for some most excellent acting. Mr. W. Edouin as Teddy Macovey, the veteran clown, has never been seen to greater advantage. There is something pathetic in the old man trying to bear himself with all the rollicking run and sprightliness of former days. He moves our hearts one moment almost to tears, our lips to smiles the next; and we applaud vociferously at the neat acrobatic business, which might make a Girard or Hanlon Lee jealous. Miss Alice Atherton, too, brings all her talent to bear on Tommy, and that she should succeed is a matter of course; her banjo solo is always encored, and her appearance as clown is the signal of a burst of laughter and cheers; in fact, Miss Atherton could go on at any moment in legitimate pantomime and give the youngsters a glimpse of the old-fashioned fun that is seldom seen now-a-days. The burden of the performance rests on the shoulders of this clever pair, and we venture to say that they have rarely done better work. Miss Emily Dowton as Mrs. Macovey may be mentioned for a bit of excellent acting as Pantaloon, and Miss Rosie Laurie's shapely limbs lend themselves easily to the graceful evolutions of the Columbine. "The Coming Clown" is from the pen of

Mr. Mark Melford, a prolific writer, though perhaps not exactly a cultured one, and the author of the farce "Turned Up."

A recent visit to the Standard Theatre was rewarded by an excellent piece of acting on the part of Mr. Bassett Roe in the reviva of "A Dark Secret." Mr. Bassett Roe shows uncommon promise for one so young at his work, and should made a mark some day. His performance of the miserly murderer showed surprising subtlety, and was enriched with many artistic touches.

The many admirers of Mr. Clifford Harrison, whose Saturday afternoon recitals at the Steinway Hall once more prove to be the most intellectual and satisfying entertainment of the kind in London, should not fail to obtain and study diligently his new book of poems, "The Hours of Leisure," just published by Messrs. Kegan Paul. There they will find "The Bells of Is," "Carcassonne," "An Hour before the Dawn," and several other poems for recitation that this author has made famous from time to time; but they will find also in the lighter lyrics evidences of a keenly sensitive poetic temperament and the thoughts of a thoroughly imaginative mind. Mr. Harrison's verse is as melodious as it is eloquent with truth. Hundreds knew him as a gifted elocutionist and dreamy musician, few as a painter in words and true poet in sentiment.

The Royal Amateur Orchestral Society gave their second concert of the season at St. James's Hall, on February 19th. Limit of space precludes my going into details, but I am able to record a success. The artists engaged were Miss Kate Flinn, Fräulein Luise, Pfeiffer von Beet, Mdles. Marianne and Clara Eissler, and Senor Cor-de-Lass, the three latter carrying off the honours. Senor Cor-de-Lass is a brilliant pianist, though wanting the dash of power. The young sisters are proficient exponents of the violin and harp, possessing taste and execution; the young harpist, however, has, I think, the most artistic temperament of the two, the violinist's being very perfect, but cold. The amateurs, under the *bâton* of their talented conductor, Mr. George Mount, did some excellent work in Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, "Premiere suite," Moszkowski, Beethoven's overture, "Leonora," and Weber's "Invitation to Dance," arranged for orchestra by Berlioz with his admirable skill. This was undoubtedly the most perfect piece of the concert; the *ensemble*, style, execution, all was very good, and but for the flute, whose tones were too shrill, one could pronounce it quite perfect. The audience was large and fashionable, and altogether the Society is to be congratulated on a very successful and interesting concert.

The most interesting feature of the Westminster Orchestral Society's Sixth Concert, given by this promising young body of musicians at

the Town Hall, on Wednesday, Feb. 16, was Sir Arthur Sullivan's Concerto for violoncello, in D major, first produced at the Crystal Palace on Nov. 24, 1866, when Signor Piatti was the soloist. It was one of the composer's earlier works, and though full of promise is not one of his best. It has not been heard in public since. On this occasion Mr. J. E. Hambleton was the soloist, and the orchestra led by Mr. H. C. Tonking, and ably conducted by Mr. Charles Stewart Macpherson, did fair justice to the composition. Sullivan's Overture di Ballo, written for the Birmingham Festival of 1870 (the original MSS. copies of both orchestral pieces were kindly lent for the evening) and Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D, were creditably performed, the latter was taken slower than usual. A very youthful violinist, Master Gerald Walenn, acquitted himself remarkably well in a "Scene de Ballet," by De Beriot, playing with taste and facility, and will prove a credit to the Royal Academy. Mr. T. J. Grylls was heard to advantage in the serenade from "Don Giovanni," and a ballad from "The Sorcerer." The success of the evening, however, was the singing of Miss Blanche Murray, medallist R.A.M., whose excellent method and pure mezzo-soprano voice gained her enthusiastic applause in Cowen's "The Outcry," and the song from "Patience," "Silvered is the raven hair." The concluding number was the "Graveful Dance," from the music to "Henry VIII.," which was evidently thoroughly appreciated by the very large audience assembled. The next concert, to consist entirely of operatic music, will take place on Wednesday, May 25, a smoking concert in the meantime being held on Saturday, April 2, and a dinner, to commemorate the inauguration of the Society, will no doubt be well attended at the Holborn Restaurant, on March 25.

Again has the Tottenham House Dramatic Club scored a success in its annual performance. Amateurs now all wend their way to the Novelty Theatre, this pretty little house having at last found its proper use. February the 5th brought a large and appreciative audience within its walls, and the members of the Tottenham House Dramatic Club undeniably distinguished themselves in their endeavours to amuse their friends. The ladies were one and all professional. On this, as on former occasions, the Club showed their judgment both in the selection and the casting of the pieces. But for the painfully amateurish acting of Mr. R. Roberts, F. W. Broughton's charming comedietta, "Withered Leaves," was well played all round. Lady and Sir Conyers Conyers had good representatives in Miss Effie Liston and Mr. D. E. Owen. The Arthur Middleton of Mr. R. J. Lovell lacked the necessary refinement during the early scenes, but the latter ones were acted with earnestness and much feeling. Tom Conyers had a spirited, merry, and natural representative in Mr. H. Hammond, who thoroughly entered into the humour of the character. As May Rivers, not only did Miss Kittie Claremont act well, but she gave a true rendering of a part too often interpreted with undue sentimentality. "The Upper Crust" was

capitally played. H. J. Byron's comedy exactly suited the powers of the company. As Barnaby Doublechick, Mr. J. A. Stuart was the life and soul of the performance; he was careful not to remember too much that Mr. J. L. Toole had created the part, and both his reading and acting were good. Mr. R. J. Lovell was a very good Lord Hesketh; while the Sir Robert of Mr. H. Finnis proved one of the best things this clever young amateur has done. A remarkably good bit of character acting was Doublechick's butler as represented by Mr. J. A. Laffy. Mr. H. Hammond made a gentlemanly Walter Wrentmore, showing depth of feeling and ease of manner. Mr. Hammond certainly ranks among the best amateurs of the day, and is generally successful in all he undertakes. Miss Lizzie Henderson was a capital Lady Boobleton. As Norah, Miss Effie Liston had a part that suited her especially well. Miss Kittie Claremont was a pretty, dainty, but above all witty, Kate Vennimore. Both pieces were well put on the stage, and produced under the direction of Mr. W. Holman. Scenery and appointments were excellent, and the Tottenham House Band gave good music throughout the evening.

This cruel winter has laid the hand of death on many a well-known name. Among those belonging to the musical world, we are sorry to number Frederic Lablache, the eldest son of the world-famed operatic basso. M. Frederic Lablache also belonged to the operatic stage, and appeared as a successful baritone in Italian opera in this country among such stars as his father, Rubini, Tamburini, Stolz, Jenny Lind, &c. For many years he had withdrawn from the stage and given his time up to teaching. Born on August 29, 1815, M. Lablache married a lady vocalist of Scotch birth, and became a widower a few years ago. The death of his wife and the decease of his unmarried daughter, a lady clever with her pen, cast a sadness on his latter days. His other daughter, the Baroness Rokitansky, wife of the well-known basso, is still living in Vienna; and his son, Mr. Luigi Lablache, the actor, has been for some years an established favourite in the English provinces. M. Frederic Lablache died at his residence in London on January 30 last, deeply regretted by many friends.

'Tis fit that sister Arts should fraternise. Music and Drama found an appropriate home in the "19th Century Art Galleries," on the evening of February 15th, when a fashionable audience assembled to hear Mr. and Mrs. Chillingham Hunt, and Mrs. M. A. Carlisle in their Musical and Dramatic Recital. Mrs. Chillingham Hunt gave three Pianoforte Soli, Liszt's "Le Rossignol" being the most successful; this lady besides proved herself an efficient accompanist. Songs by Pratt, Marzials, Tosti, de Lara, and Campana were agreeably warbled by Mrs. M. A. Carlisle, whose handsome presence and tasteful dress undoubtedly formed the prettiest picture in the gallery. In response to an encore she sang Queen Marie-Antoinette's

quaint song, "Cest mon Ami." To Mr. Chillingham Hunt fell the heaviest task, but he was thoroughly equal to it. I have rarely heard a reciter with so unfailling a memory; add to this a good and powerful voice, energy, and unflagging spirits, and we have here the making of a first-rate reciter, if careful study and insight of character have given the requisite artistic finish to those gifts. Mr. Chillingham Hunt's enunciation is clear and distinct, however rapid; his emphasis good, and one is rather surprised at an occasional strangeness of pronunciation such as "Courudge" for "Courage." So slight a fault would be easily conquered with a little care. Mr. Chillingham Hunt's pathos lacks the true ring in it that moves an audience to tears; for instance, in Clement Scott's poem, "The Warriors of the Sea," the reciter showed great dramatic power, the story was told with enthusiasm, but the touch of feeling was wanting. In the churchyard scene from Hamlet, the voice selected for Laertes was not happy, and Hamlet was given in rather a monotonous key, except the speech in the grave, which was most spirited. The grave-digger was excellent. The scenes from "Henry IV.," introducing Falstaff, were conceived in the true spirit, but the assumed voice was unduly exaggerated, reminding one too forcibly of the roaring of some wild animal, thus detracting from the real merit of the impetuosity. In serious speeches Mr. Chillingham Hunt is apt to be too deliberate, but this was of good effect in the Trial Scene, from "The Bells," and it is to the praise of the reciter that his imitation of Mr. Henry Irving was limited to a few words here and there. Comedy is Mr. Chillingham Hunt's forte, indeed he excels in this; the Screen Scene, from "The School for Scandal," was admirably rendered as a whole. Joseph was, perhaps, not altogether satisfactory, but Sir Peter, and especially Charles, were extremely good, and here the reciter may well be said to have, by word painting, given an artistic picture to the Gallery. Moseley's "Love in a Balloon" was an amusing ending to a pleasant evening, and well rendered. In conclusion, Mr. Chillingham Hunt is a clever and gifted reciter, his faults are few, and his qualities many.

Mdlle. Antoinette Trebelli has last month made a most successful *début* in oratorio, at Mr. Charles Halle's grand concert in Manchester, when she was specially engaged as leading soprano in "Judas Maccabæus." Mdlle. Antoinette Trebelli surprised her greatest admirers by her power and expression in this arduous branch of musical art, untried by her until now. She won golden opinions from public and critics, and bids fair to become one of the leading stars in oratorio in this country. We are glad to see this young singer following in the steps of her talented and gifted mother.

The Sixth Concert of the Westminster Choral Society was given before a large and fashionable audience at the Town Hall, on Wed-

nesday evening, Feb. 16, and the work done showed that this young and promising body of amateurs has lost none of its enthusiasm, or that its hitherto success has rendered them less careful or painstaking in their efforts. The attraction of the evening was Sir Arthur Sullivan's Concerto in D, for violoncello, given for the first time at the Crystal Palace, on Nov. 24, 1866, when Signor Piatti was the soloist; since when it is not known to have been played in public. As it was not printed, the composer kindly lent the original MSS. On this occasion Mr. J. Edward Hambleton undertook the solo, and, if not without blemish, acquitted himself fairly, and was well supported by the orchestra, led by Mr. H. C. Tonking, and conducted by Mr. C. Stewart Macpherson. Beethoven's symphony, No. 2, in D, which opened the concert, was taken a little slower than usual, but was creditably executed. Miss Blanche Murray, a medallist of the R.A.M., gained a decided success by her admirable singing of Cowen's, "The Outcry," and "Silvered is the raven hair," from "Patience;" the young lady, being the possessor of a rich mezzo-soprano voice, and a good method, should speedily rise in public esteem. A very youthful violinist, Master Gerald Walenn, also a student of the Royal Academy, exhibited much taste and delicacy, combined with precision and quality, in a "Scene de Ballet," by De Beriot, and was warmly applauded. A Serenade, from "Don Giovanie," a ballad from "The Sorcerer," "Time was when Love and I," were efficiently rendered by Mr. F. J. Grylls, and the concert closed with the "Graceful Dance," from the music to "Henry VIII." I may mention that the next concert, to consist entirely of Operatic music, will be given on Wednesday, May 25, a smoking concert preceding it on April 2, and that a dinner to commemorate the inauguration of the Society, takes place, at the Holborn Restaurant, on March 25.

Many playgoers of middle age must well remember Miss Milly Palmer who in early life married Herr David Bandmann, the tragedian. She has not been seen on the English stage for many years, but I see that Mrs. Bandmann-Palmer has been very successful in reciting in Dresden before the Queen of Saxony. She was very much applauded for her rendering of Longfellow's "Robert of Sicily" with music, and "The Women of Mumbles Head."

A capital little handy volume, called "The Playgoer's Pocket Book" (J. and R. Maxwell), compiled by Paul Vedder, is made practically useless by not having an index. A sharp lad would have indexed the volume in less than a day. As it stands it is for the dramatic library quite valueless. The Bartolozzi pictures are very pretty, and the criticism is sound and just.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the Provinces, and Paris, from January 25, 1886, to February 25, 1887:—

(Revivals are marked thus.*)

LONDON:

- Jan. 27 "Dandy Dick," farce in three acts, by A. W. Pinero. Court Theatre.
- " 31 "Princess Carlo's Plot," adaptation, in three acts, of Ouida's "Afternoon," by Hilda Hilton. Novelty Theatre.
- Feb. 2 "After Long Years," comedy-drama, in three acts, story by Mrs. Herbert Purvis, construction and dialogue by Arthur Law. Criterion Theatre. (Matinée—single performance. First production, T. R. Torquay, October 20, 1886.)
- " 2 "Fin Maccoul," comedy, by Dion Boucicault. Elephant and Castle Theatre. (Matinée—single performance, for copyright purposes.)
- " 3 "Ned Knowles," comedietta, by T. G. Warren. Opera Comique Theatre.
- " 7 "Jack-in-the-Box," "musical variety drama," in four acts, by George R. Sims and Clement Scott. Strand Theatre.
- " 14 "Mynheer Jan," comic opera, in three acts, by Harry Paulton and Mostyn Tedde; music by Edward Jakobowski. Comedy Theatre. (First produced, Grand Theatre, Birmingham, February, 1887.)
- " 15 "The Professor's Wooing," comical pastoral, in four acts. Royalty Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)
- " 15 "Mermaid," drama, in three acts, by Stebbings Heath, Ladbroke Hall. (Produced by amateurs.)
- " 16 "A Father's Sacrifice," drama, in two acts, by W. R. Varty. School of Dramatic Art.
- " 16 "The Royal Riddle," burlesque, by Horace Mills; music by Arthur Mills. New Royal Theatre, Woolwich.
- " 19 "Dimity's Dilemma," farce, by Malcolm C. Salaman. Gaiety Theatre.
- " 21 "The Three Years' System," farce, by Walter Maynard. Opera Theatre, Crystal Palace.
- " 21 "A Shadow on the Hearth," drama, in three acts, by Walter Maynard. Opera Theatre, Crystal Palace.

PROVINCES:

- Jan. 26 "Nordisa," opera, in three acts, written and composed by Frederick Corder; libretto founded on "La Bergère des Alpes." Court Theatre, Liverpool.
- " 31 "The Repentance of King Æthelred the Unready," operetta, in three tableaux, by Mrs. Burton; music by Walter Hay Shrewsbury.
- " 27 "The Golden Bough," comic opera, adapted from "La Rameau d'Or," by David Scott; music by Joseph Pebzer. Broughty Ferry. (Produced by amateurs.)
- " 31 "The Umpire," drama, in prologue and five acts. Theatre Royal, Burnley.
- Feb. 5 "Choice," comedietta, in one act, by D. M. Cord. New Public Hall, Ealing Deane.
- " 7 "Mynheer Jan," comic opera, in three acts, by Harry Paulton and Mostyn Tedde; music by Edward Jakobowski. Grand Theatre, Birmingham.

PARIS :

- Jan. 22 * "Les trente millions de Gladiateur," comedy-vaudeville in four acts, by MM. Eugène Labiche and Philippe Gille. Variétés.
- „ 26 * "La Sirène," comic opera in three acts, words by Scribe, music by Auber. Opéra Comique.
- Feb. 1 * "Les Petites Voisines," comedy in three acts, by MM. Hyppolyte Raymond and Jules de Gastyne. Palais-Royal.
- „ 1 "Franc-Chignon," parody in three tableaux, by MM. William Busnach and Albert Vanloo. Palais-Royal.
- „ 6 * "Le Cercle ou la Soirée à la mode," comedy in one act by Poinset. Théâtre Français.
- „ 6 * "L'Anglais on le fou raisonnable," comedy in one act, by Patrat. Théâtre Français.
- „ 6 * "On ne badine pas avec l'Amour," comedy in three acts, by Alfred de Musset. Théâtre Français.
- „ 9 "L'Absente," drama in five acts, by MM. Villemer and Segonzac. Château d'Eau.
- „ 10 "Ma Gouvernante," comedy in three acts, by M. Alexandre Bisson. Renaissance.
- „ 11 "Les Mystères de Paris," drama in five acts and twelve tableaux, adapted by M. Ernest Blum from the novel by Eugène Suë. Ambigu.
- „ 12 "Les Vacances du Mariage," comedy-vaudeville in three acts, by MM. Albin Valabrègue and Maurice Hennequin. Menus-Plaisirs.
- „ 12 * "Les Petits Mousquetaires," operetta, by MM. Jules Prével and Paul Ferrier; music by M. Louis Varney. Bouffes-Parisiens.
- „ 15 "Numa Roumestan," comedy in five acts, by M. Alphonse Daudet. Odéon.
- „ 16 "Rigobert," comedy-bouffe in three acts, by MM. Paul Burani and Grenet Dancourt. Cluny.
- „ 17 "Le Coup de Foudre," comedy-vaudeville in three acts and four tableaux, by MM. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. Variétés.
- „ 18 "Le Ventre de Paris," drama in five acts and seven tableaux, adapted by M. William Busnach from Zola's novel. Théâtre-de-Paris.
- „ 18 "Fransouillon," parody in one act, by MM. A. Verneuil, Maxime Guy, and Millot. Déjazet.
- „ 19 "La Vie Commune," vaudeville in three acts, by MM. Jules de Gastyne and Henri Fugère. Palais Royal.
- „ 19 * "Orphée aux enfers," opera-bouffe in four acts and twelve tableaux, by M. Hector Cremieux, music by Offenbach. Gaité.



The Holy Light.

A SONG.

A CROSS the meadows, grey with mist,
 The toiler plods his weary way,
 To where the children sleep unkissed,
 To where the mother kneels to pray!
 Far off a guiding star he sees,
 A Lamp of Love that bids him come,
 For through the gloom of darkened trees
 Shines out the Holy Light of Home!

The Light of Home! The Holy Light!
 That shines afar, that guards the nest;
 The Light that cheers the darkest night,
 The Light that leads us all to rest!

Amidst the breakers, white with foam,
 The sailor sights the land ahead,
 He longs to greet old friends at home,
 And breathes a pray'r for comrades dead.
 Far off! a faithful Light appears,
 Hope's sentinel, that steadfast gleams;
 He sees through blinding mist of tears
 A home at last—an end of dreams!

The Light at Sea! The Holy Light!
 That gleams afar to all who roam;
 The light that cheers the sailor's sight,
 The light that leads us all to Home.

Along the chancel, hush'd in pray'r,
 And worn with penitential feet,
 The woman's sob, the man's despair,
 Arise in clouds of incense sweet!
 Far off beside the Virgin's shrine,
 The lowly suppliants above,
 Of Life beyond, the perfect sign,
 Hangs out the Holy Light of Love!

The Light of Hope! The Holy Light!
 That shows the path meek martyrs trod;
 The Light that guides our souls aright,
 The Light that leads us all to God!

C.S.



" — you know you say things are 'much of a muchness';
did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?"

ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

ALICE AND THE DORMOUSE

THE THEATRE.



“ Alice ” on the Stage.

BY LEWIS CARROLL.

“ **L**OOK here ; here’s all this Judy’s clothes falling to pieces again ! ” Such were the pensive words of Mr. Thomas Codlin ; and they may fitly serve as motto for a writer who has set himself the unusual task of passing in review a set of puppets that are virtually his own—the stage-embodiments of his own dream-children.

Not that the play itself is in any sense mine. The arrangement, in dramatic form, of a story written without the slightest idea that it would ever be so adapted, was a task that demanded powers denied to me, but possessed in an eminent degree, so far as I can judge, by Mr. Savile Clarke. I do not feel myself qualified to criticise his play, as a play ; nor shall I venture on any criticism of the players, as players.

What is it, then, that I have set myself to do ? And what possible claim have I to be heard ? My answer must be that, as the writer of the two stories thus adapted, and the originator (as I believe, for at least I have not *consciously* borrowed them) of the ‘ airy nothings ’ for which Mr. Savile Clarke has so skilfully provided, if not a name, at least a ‘ local habitation,’ I may without boastfulness claim to have a special knowledge of what it was I meant them to be, and so a special understanding of how far that intention has been realised. And I fancied that there might be some readers of THE THEATRE who would be interested in sharing that knowledge and that understanding.

Many a day had we rowed together on that quiet stream—the three little maidens and I—and many a fairy-tale had been extemporised for their benefit—whether it were at times when the narrator was ‘ i’ the vein,’ and fancies unsought came crowding thick upon him ; or at times when the jaded Muse had to be

goaded into action, and plodded meekly on, more because she had to say something than that she had something to say—yet none of those many tales got written down: they lived and died, like summer midges, each in its own ‘golden afternoon,’ until there came a day when, as it chanced, one of my little listeners petitioned that the tale might be written out for her. That was many a year ago, but I distinctly remember, now as I write, how, in a desperate attempt to strike out some new line of fairy-lore, I had sent my heroine straight down a rabbit-hole, to begin with, without the least idea what was to happen afterwards. And so, to please a child I loved (I don’t remember having any other motive), I printed in manuscript, and illustrated with my own crude designs—designs that rebelled against every law of Anatomy or Art (for I had never had a lesson in drawing)—the book which I have just had reproduced in facsimile. In writing it out, I added many fresh ideas, which seemed to grow of themselves upon the original stock; and many more added themselves when, years afterwards, I wrote it all over again for publication: but (this may perhaps interest some readers of ‘Alice’ to know) every such idea, and nearly every word of the dialogue, *came of itself*. Sometimes an idea comes at night, when I have had to get up and strike a light to note it down—sometimes when out on a lonely winter walk, when I have had to stop, and with half-frozen fingers jot down a few words which should keep the new-born idea from perishing—but, whenever or however it comes, *it comes of itself*. I cannot set invention going like a clock, by any voluntary winding-up: nor do I believe that any *original* writing (and what other writing is worth preserving?) was ever so produced. If you sit down, unimpassioned and uninspired, and *tell* yourself to write for so many hours, you will merely produce (at least I am sure *I* should merely produce) some of that article which fills, so far as I can judge, two-thirds of most magazines—most easy to write, most weary to read—men call it ‘padding,’ and it is, to my mind, one of the most detestable things in modern literature. ‘Alice’ and the ‘Looking-Glass’ are made up almost wholly of bits and scraps, single ideas which came of themselves. Poor they may have been; but at least they were the best I had to offer: and I can desire no higher praise to be written of me than the words of a Poet, written of a Poet,

“He gave the people of his best:

The worst he kept, the best he gave.”

I have wandered from my subject, I know: yet grant me another minute to relate a little incident of my own experience. I was walking on a hill-side, alone, one bright summer day, when suddenly there came into my head one line of verse—one solitary line—'For the Snark *was* a Boojum, you see.' I knew not what it meant, then: I know not what it means, now: but I wrote it down: and, some time afterwards, the rest of the stanza occurred to me, that being its last line: and so by degrees, at odd moments during the next year or two, the rest of the poem pieced itself together, that being its last stanza. And since then, periodically, I have received courteous letters from strangers, begging to know whether 'the Hunting of the Snark' is an allegory, or contains some hidden moral, or is a political satire: and for all such questions I have but one answer, "*I don't know!*" And now I return to my text, and will wander no more.

Stand forth, then, from the shadowy past, 'Alice,' the child of my dreams! Full many a year has slipped away, since that 'golden afternoon' that gave thee birth, but I can call it up almost as clearly as if it were yesterday—the cloudless blue above, the watery mirror below, the boat drifting idly on its way, the tinkle of the drops that fell from the oars, as they waved so sleepily to and fro, and (the one bright gleam of life in all this slumberous scene) the three eager faces, hungry for news of fairy-land, and who would not be said 'nay' to: from whose lips "tell us a story, please," had all the stern immutability of Fate!

What wert thou, dream-Alice, in thy foster-father's eyes? How shall he picture thee? Loving, first, loving and gentle: loving as a dog (forgive the prosaic simile, but I know of no earthly love so pure and perfect), and gentle as a fawn: then courteous—courteous to *all*, high or low, grand or grotesque, King or Caterpillar, even as though she were herself a King's daughter, and her clothing of wrought gold: then trustful, ready to accept the wildest impossibilities with all that utter trust that only dreamers know; and lastly, curious—wildly curious, and with the eager enjoyment of Life that comes only in the happy hours of childhood, when all is new and fair, and when Sin and Sorrow are but names—empty words, signifying nothing!

And the White Rabbit, what of *him*? Was *he* framed on the 'Alice' lines, or meant as a contrast? As a contrast, distinctly. For *her* 'youth,' 'audacity,' 'vigour,' and 'swift directness of pur-

pose,' read 'elderly,' 'timid,' 'feeble,' and 'nervously shilly-shallying,' and you will get *something* of what I meant him to be. I *think* the White Rabbit should wear spectacles. I am sure his voice should quaver, and his knees quiver, and his whole air suggest a total inability to say 'Bo!' to a goose!

But I cannot hope to be allowed, even by the courteous Editor of THE THEATRE, half the space I should need (even if my *reader's* patience would hold out) to discuss each of my puppets one by one. Let me cull from the two books a Royal Trio—the Queen of Hearts, the Red Queen, and the White Queen. It was certainly hard on my Muse, to expect her to sing of *three* Queens, within such brief compass, and yet to give to each her own distinct individuality. Each, of course, had to preserve, through all her eccentricities, a certain queenly *dignity*. *That* was essential. And, for distinguishing traits, I pictured to myself the Queen of Hearts as a sort of embodiment of ungovernable passion—a blind and aimless Fury. The Red Queen I pictured also as a Fury, but of another type; *her* passion must be cold and calm; she must be formal and strict, yet not unkindly; pedantic to the tenth degree, the concentrated essence of all governesses! Lastly, the White Queen seemed, to my dreaming fancy, gentle, stupid, fat and pale; helpless as an infant; and with a slow, maundering, bewildered air about her, just *suggesting* imbecility, but never quite passing into it; *that* would be, I think, fatal to any comic effect she might otherwise produce. There is a character strangely like her in Mr. Wilkie Collins' novel 'No Name:' by two different yet converging paths we have somehow reached the same ideal, and Mrs. Wragg and the White Queen might have been twin-sisters.

As it is no part of my present purpose to find fault with any of those who have striven so zealously to make this 'dream-play' a waking success, I shall but name two or three who seemed to me specially successful in realising the characters of the story.

None, I think, was better realised than the two undertaken by Mr. Sydney Harcourt, 'the Hatter' and 'Tweedledum.' To see him enact the Hatter was a weird and uncanny thing, as though some grotesque monster, seen last night in a dream, should walk into the room in broad daylight, and quietly say 'good morning!' I need not try to describe what I meant the Hatter to be, since, so far as I can now remember, it was exactly what Mr. Harcourt

has made him : and I may say nearly the same of Tweedledum : but the Hatter surprised me most—perhaps only because it came first in the play.

There were others who realised my ideas nearly as well ; but I am not attempting a complete review : I will conclude with a few words about the two children who played ' Alice ' and ' the Dormouse . '

Of Miss Phœbe Carlo's performance it would be difficult to speak too highly. As a mere effort of memory, it was surely a marvellous feat for so young a child, to learn no less than two hundred and fifteen speeches—nearly three times as many as Beatrice has in " Much Ado About Nothing " ! But what I admired most, as realising most nearly my ideal heroine, was her perfect assumption of the high spirits, and readiness to enjoy *everything*, of a child out for a holiday. I doubt if any grown actress, however experienced, could have worn this air so perfectly : *we* ' look before and after, and sigh for what is not ' : a child never does *this* : and it is only a child that can utter from her heart the words poor Margaret Fuller Ossoli so longed to make her own, ' I am all happy *now* ! '

And last (I may for once omit the time-honoured addition ' not least,' for surely no tinier maiden ever yet achieved so genuine a theatrical success?) comes our dainty Dormouse. ' Dainty ' is the only epithet that seems to me exactly to suit her : with her beaming baby-face, the delicious crispness of her speech, and the perfect realism with which she makes herself the embodied essence of Sleep, she is surely the daintiest Dormouse that ever yet told us ' I sleep when I breathe ! ' With the first words of that her opening speech, a sudden silence falls on the house (at least it has been so every time *I* have been there), and the baby-tones sound strangely clear in the stillness. And yet I doubt if the charm is due only to the incisive clearness of her articulation ; to me there was an even greater charm in the utter self-abandonment and conscientious *thoroughness* of her acting. If Dorothy ever adopts a motto, it ought to be ' Thorough . ' I hope the time may soon come when she will have a better part than ' Dormouse ' to play—when some enterprising manager will revive the ' Midsummer Night's Dream,' and do his obvious duty to the Public by securing Miss Dorothy d'Alcourt as ' Puck ' !

It would be well indeed for our churches if some of the clergy

could take a lesson in enunciation from this little child; and better still, for 'our noble selves,' if *we* would lay to heart some things that she could teach us, and would learn by her example to realise, rather more than we do, the spirit of a maxim I once came across in an old book, "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, *do it with thy might.*"

At the Call of God.

(A LAY OF ST. ANNE'S LIFEBOAT.)

CLANG! clang! clang! ringing out through the sough and the roar,
 Over the riot and rush of the wind, and the swirl of the sea;
 Clear and stern as the voice of a chief in the tumult of war,
 Cheering the heart of the weary and bracing the feeble knee:
 Shrill and high through the storm-laden air, and the wrack-hidden sky,
 Out o'er the wind-tossed sea, and out o'er the rain-beaten sod—
 Hark!—the alarm-bell flings out its sudden imperious cry—
 Flings out its summons to dare and to die—at *the Call of God!*

* * * * *

And far in the fireflight glow of the cottages under the hill,
 Where the fisherman's path climbs up from the shore to the sandy dune,
 Little ones pause in their play with a sudden foreboding of ill,
 And the song dies out on the lips, broken off in the midst of the tune.
 Only the kettle sings on its monotonous chant from the hob,
 But the good wife's hand that would lift it falls nerveless and dead at her side,
 As her quick-coming breathing is strangled and choked by a rising sob. . . .
 And the cold clutch tugs at her heart of a terror she fain would hide,
 And the sunburnt cheek of the man grows pale for a moment's space,

And the half-filled pipe drops down from the clasp of the rugged hand,

As he turns with a chill at his heart to gaze on her death-white face.

Husband and wife—they are silent a while—for—*they understand*. . . Then, with a rush of the blood and a flush of the sunburnt cheek, The great heart leaps to the deed. . . “By God! ’tis the Life-boat peal!”

“We mun gang, lass . . . happen there’s men i’ the wreck we be goin’ to seek,

“Wi’ woives an’ childer at whoam same as we, and as loves ’em as weel. . .

“God be wi’ us, my lass, and I reckon we’ll save ’em yet,

“Though there’s never a light i’ the cloud, nor a rift i’ the ugly sky.

“Little one, hast’na a kiss for thy daddy? God bless thee, my pet.

“Wife, dunna fret, we’s come back to thee, gie us—a—kiss—good-bye!”

* * * * *

Hurry, and bustle, and tramp, they are down on the wind-swept beach,

Where the sea-spray mingles dark with the dust of the sandy dunes,

And over the crests of the billows, as far as the eye can reach,

Danger and death are writ in the lines of the foam-traced runes ;

Nought of danger and death do they reck, those true Lancashire hearts.

See!—they have launched her at last through the wind and the surf and the spray,

And their strong arms bend to the oar, and the billow is cloven and parts

As the surf falls back from her bows like a baffled beast of prey.

* * * * *

Night, deep night, and the babes are asleep, but the sweethearts and wives—

(How should *they* sleep?) gather thick in a throng on the crest of the down,

Watching the sea where their loved ones are fighting the fight for their lives ;

Watch through the live-long night ’till the sun rise over the town,

And minutes grow into years and the years to an endless pain,

And the glance that was hope is despair, and the prayer dies out on the lip,

As the daylight dawns on the Ribble, and over the restless main—
Never a sign, ah God! of a boat coming back from the ship!

* * * * *

For out in the night and the darkness the fight has been fought,
and the light

Rises faint on a field where the fight has been lost and been—
won—

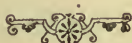
Won by the sea. *Not so!* They are *winners* who died here to-
night.

Won? Ay! Is it *not* winning to die for a duty done?

Past is the din of the storm, long past, yet its echoes are ringing
Even to-day in our hearts, and will ring till we lie 'neath the sod,
And still through the midst of our sorrow a low Jubilate is singing—
“*Praise to the heroes who dared and who died at the Call of God!*”

BERTHA LAFFAN.

Stratford-on-Avon.



The First Nights of My Young Days.

BY GODFREY TURNER.

[FOURTH PAPER.]

IT may conduce to something like system in the order of these reminiscences if, having got into the Sadler's Wells connection, I remain therewith till I have made an end of the youthful epoch during which I sat under Mr. Phelps—that is, from '44 to '50, when a rather important crisis of my life led me for a time out of London. I had taken leave of boyhood, but was still on good terms with adolescence, preserving a fair share of joy in that season of growth “when the bud promised miracles—when I myself was still forming.” It was of George Bennett's power of comedy—a “suppressed force” of its kind—that I in part made my parable last month; and I now recur to his performance of Benjamin Stout, the red-hot politician, in “Money.” If the occasion was not a first night, as I incline to think it was, all I can say is that it was a night of much popular interest and excitement, Bulwer's comedy being presented for the benefit of Mrs. Warner. The house was crowded—overcrowded, indeed—and the entrance-money was being returned to those dissatisfied folk who found “no room for standing, miscalled standing-room,” at the back of the gallery. One of them held an angry altercation, from that unseen and unseeing eminence, with Mr. Phelps on the stage. However, silence was obtained at last, and “Money” was as well played, on the whole, as it ever had been played at the Haymarket by Macready, Helen Faucit, Mrs. Glover, Miss Priscilla Horton, David Rees, Webster, Wrench, and Strickland.

I am bold, perhaps, in saying this, inasmuch as the Haymarket cast was a little altered when I saw Macready as Evelyn. The Clara Douglas of that later season was Mrs. Stirling, in lieu of Miss Faucit; Miss Horton had been succeeded in Georgina

Vesey by Miss Julia Bennett ; and Mrs. Glover in Lady Franklin by another actress, perhaps Mrs. Seymour, but I am not sure. The male performers kept to their original parts. My comparison of Phelps's company with Macready's, or Webster's, need only be modified, therefore, as regards the ladies ; and here, in any case, I am bound to admit that the balance was in favour of the Haymarket ; for, excellent as Mrs. Marston was in Lady Franklin, Mrs. Glover was much the finer comedian of the two ; Miss Cooper had no pretension to the archness of Miss Horton, or even to the quiet, scheming worldliness of Miss Bennett ; while the bare notion of Mrs. Warner's rivalry, in the character of Clara Douglas, with Miss Faucit or Mrs. Sterling, is simply absurd. The Sadler's Wells' heroine sat as heavy on Clara as on Pauline, in Bulwer's other play, with an equally high-flown hero. But I am heretic enough to own that Phelps pleased me as much as Macready, though the part of Evelyn was of Macready's own creation ; that Graves was as fittingly played by Mellon, to my thinking, as by Webster ; that Henry Marston was as good as Wrench, if not better, in Dudley Smooth ; that Anthony Young far excelled Strickland in Sir John Vesey ; and that a greater success than the Benjamin Stout of David Rees was, as I have before said, the life-like character-portrait of selfish, vulgar, political egotism presented by that heavy tragedian, who could be earnestly funny beyond measure in any comic part that naturally suited him—George Bennett. In making these comparisons, I wish to be understood not as pitting any one actor against another in general capacity—I am speaking with regard to suitability of character more than anything else. In each of the Sadler's Wells company whom I have named, there was the happiest fitness for the parts respectively assigned them in "Money." Marston could not have played all Wrench's parts as well as Wrench ; probably that one character, Dudley Smooth, stood alone in the Wrench repertory as befitting the Sadler's Wells actor. On the other hand, Wrench could no more have played Iago, Edgar, Iachimo, Marc Antony, Florizel, Orlando, Ferdinand, Icilius—to take at random a few of Marston's favourite parts—than Mr. Wyndham, excellent comedian as he is, could attempt either of them now. It is no odious comparison to say that Charles Mathews did not make nearly so good a Box, in Morton's capital farce, as did Buckstone. This puts entirely

beside the question any claim of the first-named player to be accounted the superior comedian of the two. Buckstone could not have equalled Charles Mathews in any one character for which Charles Mathews was at all fit. On such ground alone I put Mellon, with his dry, unconscious humour; George Bennett, with a humour just as unconscious, but unctious instead of dry; and Younge, with his quaint incisiveness, above Webster, David Rees, and Strickland, "on this occasion only." The play is a mouthing, clap-trap, sham-philosophical play: but, like others of its type, it is capable of being presented with excellent effect by actors who do not mouth, and who are so much above clap-trap as to make us forget that there is anything so hateful in existence.

With Phelps's third season began my practice of attending, whenever practicable, the First Nights at Sadler's Wells—I mean all those that involved either a new play or an important revival. Creswick's first appearance in London was on that little stage, Hotspur, I believe, being the character chosen for his introduction to an Islington audience. But I saw him first as Cassius, which part he must have played very soon afterwards; and the occasion was that of a most memorably intelligent representation of "Julius Cæsar," modestly efficient in scenic illustration, but far more remarkable for excellence of acting throughout. The useful Mr. Mellon, with a tinge of Irish brogue, was Julius Cæsar—not physically suited for the part, I grant you, but sound enough to secure a respectful hearing throughout. Phelps was Marcus Brutus, Henry Marston an admirable Marc Antony, Creswick the new Cassius (as I have said), and "Tony" Younge an irreproachable Casca—just the man whose bluntness is described by his companions as hiding his quick mettle and serving to relish his wit. Mrs. Brougham, a tall, comely, lady-like, good-tempered woman, who had an unpretending way of saying smart things—she once told Phelps, who apologised for offering her a very small part, that it did not much signify, as it was only a matter between herself and the parish of Clerkenwell—played, unless I am mistaken, Portia. But, after this length of time, it may very well be that my recollection has served me a slippery trick. There are only two female characters in the play, Portia and Calphurnia, both of subordinate interest. It is not negligence that restrains me from settling the question by

inquiry among my wiser friends who have preserved their play-bills. The simple truth is, I mean to flatter my pride in a fairly good working memory by trusting it to the utmost; and if I trip now and then, it will not be often, I know.

Do you call to mind a touch of boyish nature in "Great Expectations"? Pip goes to Drury Lane when "Julius Cæsar" is performed, and he revels in the dream-like luxury of having "all these noble Romans" summoned for his pleasure. I don't want to moralise, especially do I not want to stir up strife with my good friends who honestly think it amusing to sit, hour after hour, in front of a performance "that rings with idiot-laughter solely"; but I cannot refrain from the question—which I ask with ceaseless wonder that any question of the kind should be so much as possible—What is the most agreeable as well as most sustaining food for a healthy imagination? Is it senseless parody, garnished with dumb show, noise, and scanty brilliancy of dress, on the one part; or is it reality, whether of humour or of pathos, on the other? "Those noble Romans," I take it, though they may have imposed on young Mr. Pip's crude ideas of classic humanity, wrought no harm either to his heart or to his head. Nor, it will be urged, does harm come of laughter—even of the laughter that comes of folly and nonsense. Let this also be granted, with such reasonable reservation as we are bound to admit in regard to every good thing, and the possibility of having too much of it. Still, do you not think even the best foolery, in any considerable quantities, is apt to be somewhat enervating, and to be followed by a state of intellect which decidedly needs a tonic? If you are of opinion to the contrary, we differ, that is all, and so let the matter end.

As the part of Marc Antony is one that eminently suited Mr. Henry Marston, I will pay his memory the just due of an assertion that he himself adorned that character with every kind of theatrical grace that elocution of the finest type, manly presence, nobility of porte and gesture, and, withal, an indescribable and, I believe, inborn resemblance to the antique Roman, could bestow on it. Marston, who was the son of a physician named Marsh, was a Lancashire lad, with a healthy turn for wrestling and other sports, and with quite as healthy an intellectual bent, which made him a student, at least in all that related to the archæology of his

profession. It was in the old reading-room of the British Museum—think of that! the *old* reading-room; long before the opening of the great circular edifice, which was not built yesterday, though sometimes it almost seems so!—that I met him first. His friend Whitelock, then translating for “The Daily News,” brought us together again after our slight acquaintance had lapsed for some years, and thenceforward we knew rather more of each other. For impromptu oratory, a little ornate, artificial, and old-fashioned, but wonderfully easy in its force, and the stately flow of period after period, I have heard no man to equal Henry Marston. Strange to say, the sepulchral tone of his voice, on the stage, was scarcely noticeable off. His orations in social life meant little or nothing, I daresay, and you could not have said afterwards what they were all about. But this was no imputation on his sincerity; for if he had anything to tell a friend in a quiet, confidential way, he was a very transparency of candour and simple truth. It was the habit of speaking, as an orator in private, that helped to fit him, no doubt, for a public part such as Marc Antony; and I shall never forget him in the rostrum, when he swayed the Roman multitude like a Daniel Whittle Harvey of the ancient days. The very artificiality and mannerism of Marston helped him in this particular part—in its oratorical passages, at all events. Shakespeare has distinguished the two characters very significantly. It was not without purpose that the “myriad-minded man” set the speech of Brutus, eloquent as it is, in prose. Up to this point, the third act, as well as the whole of the act preceding it, and great part of the first, had been in blank verse. Yet, for this important speech, the language changes; and, though it is language of great force and simple beauty, its earnestness is so real that it cannot brook ornament, and the words must come with all the untrained ruggedness of nature. I do not say that Shakespeare finds it necessary to vary his diction after this plan as a general rule, or that he has done it in any other instance with exactly the same intention; but there is here an especial need of contrast between two speakers; and how could that contrast be better enforced and brought into dramatic prominence than by this touch of suggestive art? Anthony comes after, with his ornate rhetoric, his irony, his insinuations, his pretended repression of feelings, which he all the while dexterously obtrudes—with such an air, too, of familiarity!

I am no orator as Brutus is :
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man
That love my friend.

Was ever bluntness more nicely pointed? The specious hints, reservations, withdrawals, qualifying excuses and regrets for hasty utterances that, mayhap, "wrong the honourable men," are metrically arranged in this incomparable scene, that cannot be hackneyed by all the Elegant Extracts, Enfield's Speakers, and Beauties of Shakespeare that ever were thumbed and dog's-eared in the service of schoolboy rote. Phelps was finely impressive in Brutus : his little touches of tenderness and melancholy being at once delicate and forcible, as they always are in a tragedian of highest excellence. They are the dew-drops on the lion's mane. The sad words, uttered with stoical effort, "Portia is dead," touched the audience by their simplicity and depth of sadness. So, too, the kind words spoken to the boy Lucius broke from the rough soldier with a strange pathos. I have always thought these *minutiæ* of dramatic expression among the finest and most spiritual qualities in Henry Irving, though we are fated for a time to forget them in the mocking misanthropy of Mephistopheles. The Cassius of Creswick, as I remember, did not greatly impress me, though I admired its carefully disciplined effort, and the perfect orthoepy of the actor in every speech. I don't think Mr. Creswick ever pronounced a word incorrectly ; and he had at all times so good an ear that he would occasionally betray a passing sense of pain at a mispronunciation. I recollect, in illustration of this sensitiveness, a little incident in a social gathering, at which an eminent Divine took upon himself to rebuke the shortcomings of modern actors, in the matter of vowel-sounds, though his own were not above the suspicion of impurity. The artful contrivances exerted by Creswick to draw the reverend gentleman into mentioning Trinity College amused me greatly. At last, the actor's sly purpose was attained ; and, as he no doubt expected, he had the superlative delight of hearing his clerical companion say *Trinaty* College. Creswick was thenceforth the happiest man in the room ; and when the party was breaking up, he rubbed his hands softly, and was heard murmuring, with a blissful chuckle, "I knew I should catch him."

The correctness of Creswick, in fact, was all I could admire in his performance of Cassius, and I had to get the Sadler's Wells

first night out of my recollection before I was really able to like him, as in time I learned to do. After a generally staid and moderate performance, he made a violent end of Cassius, and treated the gallery to one of the straightest "backfalls" I ever saw. It is, after all, an ostentatious and "see-how-I-do-it" mode of dying, seldom practised, I should think, except professionally. Younge's Casca I have already praised. What an enormous advantage it must have been to a rigidly economic management to have such a Protean player as that in the company! I have said that Younge could play Harley's parts as well as Harley, and I am sure the former would have made an excellent Touchstone. But could Harley have ventured at any time on Casca? When I was speaking of Phelps's Brutus, but now, and of the noble Roman's gracious tenderness and considerate bearing towards his serving-boy, Lucius, I should have named the actress who played this little part with charming simplicity. We have all seen good, homely-looking Mrs. Stevens in elderly parts of the quietly comic and every-day type, and have laughed at her gravity and her grievances. She has not changed her name since those old Sadler's Wells days, when the bills gave her forth as Miss Stevens, and when she had the same comical, good-humoured, round little face, the same round eyes, fringed with light eyelashes, the same quiet, natural, unobtrusive manner. Lucius—*ingenui vultus puer, ingenuique pudoris!*—with round flaxen curls all over his head, was indeed no other than our old friend, who made a capital boy in those days of my First Nights. Is it not with an affectionate gratitude that we who are growing old should think of the players who ministered to our rational enjoyment when we, and they also, were young?

(*To be continued.*)



Madame Arnould Plessy.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

IT is a fixed principle—as immutable as were the laws of Medes and Persians—with old *habitués* of the Comédie Française, that no actress has succeeded in perfectly interpreting the difficult character of Célimène in the “Misanthrope” since the days of Mdlle. Mars. I am unable either to endorse or impugn this verdict, never having seen the great artist in the part; and can only speak—*avec connaissance de cause*—of those of its representatives whose performance I have had an opportunity of witnessing, namely, Mdlle. Denain, Mdlle. Madeleine Brohan, and the subject of the present notice. Of these the first was stiff in manner and bourgeoise in tone; the second—a remarkably handsome woman—was distressingly monotonous, and rather resembled a beautiful lay-figure than Molière’s capricious heroine; whereas the third, although doubtless inferior in many respects to her illustrious predecessor, had a witchery of fascination peculiarly her own, and invested the personage of Célimène with a subtle charm and an irresistible coquetry, any approach to which the frequenters of the Théâtre Français, judging from appearances, are not likely soon to see again.

Jeanne Sylvanie Plessy, a stage name assumed by her father, an itinerant comedian exercising his profession wherever he had a chance, after the fashion of Ragotin’s strollers in the Roman Comique, was born at Metz, but in what year has not hitherto transpired. Of her early childhood, as well as of the real name of her parents, nothing is known; it is, however, an established fact that in 1829 she became a pupil of Michelot and Samson at the Conservatoire, and progressed so rapidly under their tuition that four years later she was encouraged to make her first public essay on the boards of a little theatre in the Rue de Lancry, managed by that privileged providence of beginners Saint-Aulaire, in La Harpe’s long since forgotten drama of “Mélanie.” As luck



"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

MR. LEWIS WALLER.

would have it, the director of the Comédie Française, M. Jouslin de la Salle, happened to be present on the occasion, and, struck with the grace and beauty of the *débutante*, at once engaged her for his theatre, where she appeared March 10, 1834, as Emma in Alexandre Duval's "Fille d'Honneur," and three days afterwards created the part of Cœlie in Scribe's "Passion Secrète."

At that period the "house of Molière" was sadly in want of feminine recruits; Mdlle. Mars, it is true, still retained her immense popularity, and her exquisite talent showed little, if any, trace of decay; but she was ill seconded by her lady colleagues, none of whom, with the single exception of Mdlle. Anaïs, could fairly be classed above mediocrity. The advent, therefore, of a young and charming actress, gifted with genuine, if as yet immature, talent, and passionately fond of her art, was a godsend both to the theatre and the public, who received her with marked favour, and stimulated by their applause her persevering efforts to deserve it.

In 1836 she was unanimously elected a member of the society, and from that date until 1845 distinguished herself as well by her indefatigable industry as by the extraordinary versatility of her talent. It has been calculated that the average number of new parts, many of them important novelties, played by her in the course of each year exceeded sixteen; in 1841, for instance, besides contributing to the success of several revivals, she was the original representative of the Countess in "Un mariage sous Louis Quinze," of Louise in "Une Chaîne," and of "Mdlle. de Belle Isle." Scribe confessed himself largely indebted to her for the triumph of "le Verre d'Eau" and "la Camaraderie," and Dumas fully appreciated the excellence of her Charlotte de Méran in "les Demoiselles de St. Cyr;" while old playgoers were enchanted by the graceful Henriette of "les Femmes savantes" and the archly seductive Rosine of "le Barbier de Séville."

The year 1845 abruptly severed the connection between the actress and the theatre; her secretly contracted marriage with M. Auguste Arnould, a literary man of no very brilliant repute, followed by her sudden departure from Paris to St. Petersburg, was the startling news announced and variously commented on by the journals of the time. The motive of this inconsiderate step has never been clearly ascertained, but it is more than probable that the offer of a ten years' engagement at an annual salary

of eighty-five thousand francs was a temptation sufficiently dazzling to overcome any scruples she may have felt on leaving her comrades in the lurch, and voluntarily renouncing the present and future advantages of her position as *sociétaire*. However this may be, it was soon evident that the Comédie Française had no idea of allowing the fair fugitive to escape scot-free; an action was brought against her before the civil tribunal, the damages being laid at two hundred thousand francs, a sum subsequently reduced by the court to one-half; the judgment further decreeing her exclusion from the society, and imposing on her an additional fine of six thousand francs for payment of costs. It is possible that the result of the trial may have tended rather to increase than diminish the lady's artistic reputation; and it may safely be argued that in a city like Paris, where everything connected with the stage is a matter of almost universal interest, few people would be disposed to question the merit of an actress the value of whose services was estimated by her own theatre at no less than a hundred thousand francs!

Meanwhile Madame Arnould Plessy had reached her journey's end, and, as was customary at an epoch when the arrival of a Parisian celebrity was regarded by the court of St. Petersburg as an event of social importance, met with an enthusiastic reception. The new star became at once the fashion; whatever she said or did was pronounced to be perfection, while her beauty, grace and bewitching toilettes were the daily themes admiringly discussed in every café and drawing-room of the Muscovite capital. Costly presents of furs and jewels were showered on her from all sides, Boyards were at her feet, and the haughtiest ladies vied with each other in expressions of praise and adulation; even her husband, alike insignificant in person and in talent, became an object of temporary interest, and basked contentedly in the sunshine of his wife's popularity.

The medal, however, as the self-exiled fair one soon discovered, had its reverse; if her success was incontestable, she had to work hard for it, and in a way neither congenial to her taste nor professionally advantageous to her. The constant successes of new pieces demanded by the frequenters of the theatre, and the limited number of actors at the manager's disposal, rendered it impossible even for the leading members of the company to restrict themselves to any particular line of parts; so that, whatever novelty

might be produced, their co-operation, when required, was a matter not of choice but of necessity, and the rule admitted of no exception. Thus we find Madame Arnould continually called upon to strengthen the cast of a vaudeville or melodrama, and even to essay her vocal powers in comic opera; and all this without sufficient rehearsals or preparatory study. It is, therefore, not surprising that after eight years of incessant labour—largely remunerative, it is true, but not the less distasteful—she should have found her position intolerable, and eagerly longed for a chance of escaping from it.

An opportunity soon presented itself for the realisation of her wish. In April, 1853, her old professor, Samson, retired from the stage, and, on the announcement of his farewell benefit, she wrote to him, offering her services on the occasion, provided that the manager of the Théâtre Français, M. Thierry, consented to her re-appearance. The proposal was gladly accepted, and the part selected by her was that of Araminte, in Marivaux's "Fausses Confidences," which she had never before played in France.

It was generally acknowledged that the lapse of years, far from exercising any deteriorating influence either on her talent or on her beauty, had only tended to develop both. She still possessed the same charm of manner, the same caressing intonation, more melodious, if possible, than of yore; and, in addition, had acquired a more perfect knowledge of the stage, and a dignified ease of deportment which, from her constant intercourse with the *élite* of Russian society, had become natural and familiar to her. The result of the evening was a complete triumph for the returned prodigal, her former delinquencies were at once forgiven and forgotten, and—both parties being equally anxious for a reconciliation—it was tacitly agreed that bygones should be bygones, and that negotiations should forthwith be entered into with a view of obtaining her release from her engagement at St. Petersburg, which had still two years to run. This, after some delay, having been satisfactorily arranged, she was free to resume her place as *sociétaire*, but declined to do so, wisely preferring a fixed salary of twenty-four thousand francs as *pensionnaire* to the doubtful advantage of a share in the receipts of the theatre, which at that period seldom exceeded twelve hundred francs, and often barely attained a fourth part of that sum.

The re-appearance of Madame Arnould Plessy as a permanent member of the company took place September 17, 1855, as Elmire in "Tartuffe;" and from that date until the day of her retirement from the stage she maintained an undisputed supremacy as the leading female representative of ancient and modern comedy. By dint of unremitting study she had succeeded in thoroughly familiarising herself with the style and spirit of Molière, and, if not a perfect Célimène, was, to say the least, a very attractive one; while in the "grandes coquettes" of Marivaux, those light and fanciful creations sparkling with wit and repartee, Araminte of "Les Fausses Confidences," and Sylvie of "Les Jeux de l'Amour et du Hasard," she was unapproachable.

No contemporary writer was more indebted to her than Augier, whose "Effrontés," "Le Fils de Giboyer," "Maître Guérin," and, above all, "L'Aventurière," afforded ample scope for the display of her eminently versatile qualities. "She is the only actress," he once remarked, "who requires no teaching. She divines what you wish her to do, and does it; and, what is still more extraordinary, she succeeds in imparting the same intellectual perception to those playing with her, so that, whenever she is on the stage, all is certain to go smoothly."

During the rehearsals of "Le Fils de Giboyer" an instance of this occurred. In an important scene of the piece, the effect of which was marred by the inexperience of a young actor, she saw at a glance what was wanting, and, by a timely suggestion, so completely atoned for the incapacity of her colleague that the author, who was present, exclaimed, in a transport of enthusiasm: "Ah, Madame, what a pity it is that you cannot play *both* parts!"

The success of "L'Aventurière," in which Madame Arnould Plessy had a strikingly dramatic scene, inspired M. Emile Perrin (Thierry's successor in the management after the Commune) with the unfortunate idea of utilising her talent in tragedy, and of reviving "Britannicus" for the express purpose of announcing her as Agrippine. The experiment, as might have been expected, proved a disastrous failure, and was severely commented on by the Press, particularly by M. Francisque Sarcey, who strongly deprecated any further attempt to compromise the reputation of an eminent artist in parts utterly unsuited to her. The same clever critic, in an excellent notice of Madame Arnould Plessy,

refers to this subject by relating an anecdote highly creditable to her good sense:—

“A few days after the appearance of my article,” he says, “I happened to meet her at the house of an acquaintance, and, as I had expressed my opinion pretty freely, felt rather nervous as to the result of the interview. To my surprise, she came up to me with outstretched hand and a re-assuring smile: ‘You were right,’ she said, ‘and I and my advisers were wrong. You might have told me the truth more pleasantly, but I am not the less grateful for it, and thank you for the lesson.’ With these words, and a profound curtsy, she left me completely taken aback by such unexpected frankness and studied affability. Those accustomed to a very different reception in similar cases will comprehend my astonishment; for never, in the whole course of my critical experience, have I seen anything like it before or since.”

The correspondence of Dickens contains two allusions to the subject of our notice, which are somewhat contradictory. Writing to Regnier, November 21, 1855, he says: “If I could see an English actress with but one-hundredth part of the nature and art of Madame Plessy, I should believe our English theatre to be in a fair way towards its regeneration. But I have no hope of ever beholding such a phenomenon.” In another letter, addressed to Mrs. Frederick Pollock, May 2, 1870 (the year of his death), after a brief reference to the actor Lafont, he concludes by saying: “But the Lord deliver us from Plessy’s mechanical ingenuousness!”

By way of contrast to the above, I may be pardoned for quoting the criticism of George Henry Lewes, an able and acute judge of acting, which is more to the purpose, and refers to one of the prominent features of her talent, her excellent delivery. Speaking of her Elmire (in “*Tartuffe*”), he says: “Hers is the perfection of elocution, highly elaborated, yet only seen to be elaborated by critics, who can also see its ease.”

The two last important additions to Madame Arnould Plessy’s long list of original parts were Nancy, in Meilhac’s comedy of that name, and La Marquise, in Cadol’s “*Grand Maman*,” and on May 8, 1876, she finally retired from the stage, the programme of the evening including “*Le Legs*”—a farewell tribute to her favourite Marivaux—and portions of “*Le Misanthrope*” and “*L’Aventurière*.” A few graceful lines, written for the occasion

by Sully Prudhomme, and spoken by her with an emotion she was unable to repress, closed her theatrical career; and, before the last echoes of applause from an enthusiastic audience had died away, the curtain had slowly fallen, and one of the brightest ornaments of the Comédie Française had disappeared for ever from its boards.



The Dawn Song.

BY DOVER ROBERTON.

AT the beginning of the twelfth century a remarkable change passed over the poetic art of Germany.

Up to this time the cultivation of poetry had remained almost exclusively in the monastery and the ecclesiastical school, but now a development took place, transferring to the palace and the castle the art that tradition had assigned to the peculiar patronage of Mother Church.

The intense enthusiasm aroused by the Crusades indicates the source of that marvellous spirit of chivalry that characterised the whole of Keltic and Teutonic Europe in the middle ages, and as the opportunities for renown and display of prowess were principally confined to the knightly order, the knights and nobles became the poets of the day. These knights, though not scholars, indeed they were deplorably ignorant, few of them being able even to write, yet possessed a virtue that no mere book education could have given them, a virtue that contrasted strongly with the rough, barbaric spirit of the age, and suggested a theme for their poetry—a deep reverence for women. The idea of devotion to woman provided the name minne-singer, from the old German word *minne*—love, and *singen*—to sing.

The lyrical form of verse had never hitherto been used in Germany. It seems to have been an inspiration of one of the first singers, Heinrich von Veldeke, who, in an adaptation of Virgil's *Æneid*, copied probably from a French translation, produced a lyric that at once commended itself to the minne-singers, its form furnishing the suitable vehicle for passionate declarations of love.

The species of song peculiar to the bards was called the "Watch Song" or "Dawn Song," and consisted of a dialogue between the lover and his lady, generally at first through the

medium of a sentinel who guarded his mistress, and finally admitted the knight to her presence.

The warden had another office, too, in the working out of the poetic idea. He roused the lovers at dawn of day, but they, being unwilling to separate, disputed whether the light was from sun or moon, and the song from the nightingale or the lark.

Shakespeare has made use of the minne-song in "Romeo and Juliet," III., 5 :—

JUL. Wilt thou be gone, it is not yet near day ;
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear ;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree ;
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROM. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale ; look love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east ;
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tip-toe on the misty mountain-tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JUL. Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I ;
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua ;
Therefore stay yet ; thou need'st not to be gone.

ROM. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death ;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.

The nurse plays the part of watcher, and disturbs the lovers.

NURSE. Madam !

JUL. Nurse ?

NURSE. Your lady mother's coming to your chamber.
The day is broke ; be wary, look about.

The minne-songs, in consequence of the knightly inability to write, were not at the time committed to paper, and a difficulty therefore arises as to the means used in bringing the poem to the notice of the lady, the knight not being allowed, according to the rule of minne-song, to present his composition in person. The method adopted was this. The music and the poetry were improvised at the same time, and carefully repeated and corrected until the minstrel felt sure that he had produced the best of which he was capable. His squire was then brought into requisition, one possessing a good voice and accurate memory always being chosen,

and to him the knight sang his song until the deputy had it perfectly by heart. In this way the affections of the lady were favourably moved towards her lover without exposing herself to any charge of lack of modesty.

Thus the minne-songs were passed from mouth to mouth, and were never committed to paper until Johann Hadlout, one of the sweetest of the later minstrels, collected all the discoverable songs, and preserved for posterity the record of this interesting order. The following is a fair example of the poetry:—

The Sun is gone down,
And the Moon upward springeth ;
The Night creepeth onward,
The Nightingale singeth.
To himself said the Watchman,
“ Is any Knight waiting
In pain for his Lady
To give her his greeting ?
Now then for their meeting ! ”
His words heard the Knight
In the garden while roaming,
“ Ah ! Watchman,” he said,
“ Is the daylight fast coming ?
And may I not see her ?
And will thou not aid me ? ”
“ Go away in thy covert,
Lest the cock crow réveillé,
And the Dawn should betray thee.”
Then in went that Watchman,
And called for the fair,
And gently he roused her :
“ Rise, lady ! Prepare !
New tidings I bring thee,
And strange to thine ear ;
Come, rouse thou up quickly,
Thy Knight tarries near.
Rise lady ! Appear ! ”
“ Ah, Watchman, though purely
The Moon shines above,
Yet I trust not securely
That feigned tale of love.
Far, far from my presence
My own Knight is straying,
And sadly repining:
I weep his delaying.”

“Nay, Lady, yet trust him,
No falsehood is there.”
Then up sprang the Lady
And braided her hair,
And donned her white garments,
Her purest of white,
And her heart with joy trembling,
She rushed to the sight
Of her own faithful Knight.

Some very elaborate essays have been written to show that the German minne-song was not an indigenous production at all, but merely borrowed from the amorous Provençal poetry of the French troubadour. True, there is similarity in form between the two schools, but the inner idea is totally different.

No unprejudiced critic who compares the sensuous, or even sensual, ballads of Provence with those of Germany can hesitate for a moment in pronouncing the minne-song an independent creation. There underlies it a deep conviction of sadness—a half-hopeless distrust of any satisfaction derivable from pleasure, and yet, at the same time, an acceptance of the philosophic necessity to seize the passing rapture as it flies. The poet's appeal, moreover, was one of homage and deference, never marred by a line that would offend the most prudish delicacy: in a word, the minne-singer was endowed with what was quite absent from the Provençal—reverence. He approached the heart of his mistress with almost a religious fervour, as though before the shrine of a goddess.

The age of minstrelsy in Germany synchronised with the rise and fall of the Swabian House of Hohenstauffen (1138 to 1254), and hence has been generally known as the Swabian School of Poetry. Its decline was marked by the transference of poetic art to the cities, where the mechanics strove to imitate the graceful verses of the knights, but succeeded only in producing the dull and heavy Meister-song. A better class of poets than these took as subjects for their poems the myths of King Arthur and Charlemagne, that were, at the close of the thirteenth century, being invented and circulated throughout Europe and Asia, and thus there came to be a third variety called the Minne-romance, culminating, in due time, in the splendid German epic of the *Nibelungen*.

A Woman Killed with Kindness.

BY FRANK MARSHALL.

“A WOMAN KILLED WITH KINDNESS” (A TRAGEDY), FIRST PRINTED 1617; REVIVED BY THE DRAMATIC STUDENTS, AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE, ON TUESDAY, MARCH 8.

NONE of the Elizabethan dramatists, with the exception, perhaps, of Chapman, have been so undeservedly neglected as Thomas Heywood. Except the above play, scarcely any of his numerous dramatic works are known, even by name. He is said to have been the author, or part author, of upwards of two hundred plays; but of these some five-and-twenty only have come down to us. He wrote also several books, of which “The Apology for Actors,” “The History of Merlin,” and “The Hierarchy of Angels” are best known. As a dramatist he has been almost as much neglected in the library as on the stage, there being no good edition of his works. As far as the text goes, the reprint by Pearson, in six volumes, in his series of Old Dramatists, is very valuable to the student; but to the general reader it is of little use. On the stage, even “The Woman Killed with Kindness” has never been represented since the Restoration till this revival by the Dramatic Students, a revival which—in spite of all the faults that might naturally be expected in a work like this, rendered by a company who, with a few exceptions, have only commenced their artistic career—does the young actors and actresses who took part in it the very greatest credit. In the year 1810 a tragic drama, by Joseph Moser, entitled “Ingratitude; or, the Adulteress,” was printed in the “European Magazine,” vol. lviii., but it does not appear to have been acted. So far, therefore, as the acting record of this play goes, it may be said to be a blank; for, though Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps kindly placed at my disposal his collection of extracts from Registers, &c., relating to

"The Queenes Servants" (Queen Anne, wife of James I.), by whom this play was frequently performed, I was unable to find any record of the cast, or, indeed, any mention of its representation. There does not seem to be any stage tradition concerning it; and, among many difficulties with which the young Dramatic Students had to contend, not the least was the scantiness of the stage directions in the original; and the fact that, as is frequently the case in old plays, the portions of the dialogue to be spoken aside were not indicated. Add to these difficulties the very incorrect way in which the text was printed, it being full of errors, which may account for some of the elocutionary blunders of the actors, which the critics noticed.

In speaking of the play itself, it is easy to point out a multitude of faults. In the first place, like many of the plays of that period, it consists of two plots, which are as nearly separate and distinct as it is possible to be. Between the domestic tragedy, which gives its name to the play, and the story of the quarrel between Sir Charles Mountford and Sir Francis Acton, and the terrible trials through which the former and his sister pass, there is no real dramatic connection; save in the fact that Sir Francis is brother to Mistress Anne Frankford, and that all the characters in the underplot are brought on in the last scene. As far as any influence, which they have upon the main action of the play is concerned, they might just as well be all cut out, at least on the stage. The art of dramatic construction seems to have been cultivated by few, if any, of Shakespeare's contemporaries. If the author of "The Merchant of Venice" and of "Hamlet" had treated the story of this play, he would have shown us far more of the gradual, but sure, process by which Anne Frankford, though she loves her husband and is no wanton at heart, yet falls into the power of the treacherous Wendoll. As it is, though Heywood was a genuine student of human nature, and could analyse the emotions of men's and women's hearts, as he shows often enough in this play; yet, by burdening his tragedy with this irrelevant underplot, he hampers himself, and is forced to become abrupt and jerky in the development of his plot, just at those very points where its progress should be gradual and steady. The play is not divided into acts and scenes in the original; and though this defect is supplied in the edition of the Dramatic Students, as well, perhaps, as was possible, Act IV. must inevitably seem very

tame after the powerful scene in which Frankford pronounces sentence on his guilty wife. In fact, after the scene mentioned, there is really no dramatic situation at all, only sentiment and abstract emotion. It is probable that the fatal rapidity with which Heywood produced his plays prevented him from attempting to elaborate the story of them, even if he felt conscious of any necessity for so doing. The soliloquy of Frankford at the beginning of Act I., scene 3, may be pointed out as one of the serious defects of the play. I quote the speech from the acting edition of the Dramatic Students (p. 12) :—

How happy am I amongst other men,
That in my mean estate embrace content !
I am a gentleman, and by my birth
Companion with a king ; a king's no more.
I am possess'd of many fair revenues,
Sufficient to maintain a gentleman.
Touching my mind, I am studied in all arts ;
The riches of my thoughts, and of my time,
Have been a good proficient ; but the chief
Of all the sweet felicities on earth,
I have a fair, a chaste, and loving wife ;
Perfection all, all truth, all ornament.
If man on earth may truly happy be,
Of these at once possess'd, sure I am he.

It is difficult to see how the very best actor could make anything of such a speech as this. It is not the language of a man thinking aloud ; it is simply an ill-contrived expression of what should have been put into dialogue. The next speech of Frankford, after Nicholas has announced the approach of Wendoll, is equally undramatic. In fact, Heywood's verse is very often difficult to render with effect, even for the most practised elocutionist ; the number of lines ending with a stop, and the occurrence of rhymed couplets in the most emotional passages, tend to cripple any dramatic vigour that the speaker may possess. But, in spite of its faults, there is a strong human interest in the piece, and a genuine pathos in the great scene where Frankford discovers his wife's infidelity, that must touch an audience when interpreted by actors who are really in earnest, however deficient may be their skill in elocution. Many persons, who knew the play merely from reading it, must have been surprised to see how Act III. affected to tears even men who are not given, as a rule, to such emotion. There is a directness about Heywood's style

in his more emotional scenes, which goes straight to the heart ; and he possesses one quality sadly lacking in many of our countrymen who write for the stage in the present day, he is thoroughly English. For so marked is this quality in him—a quality which he possesses in common with Shakespeare—that even in those few plays of his, the scene of which is laid in foreign countries and in other times than his own, the thoughts and language of his character are unmistakably English. But what may be called the Anglo-Saxon vigour of Heywood's most powerful scene is much impaired by the sacrifices which have to be made to the prudery of the present day. A generation, which greedily devours the details of a Campbell divorce case, cannot bear to hear a man say, upon the stage, that he has discovered his wife and her lover in one another's arms. I notice that one of the critics found fault with Mr. Fuller Mellish for not pursuing Wendoll with his drawn sword ; but he would have been hardly justified in carrying out that portion of the old stage direction, when so much that was important to the scene was, in deference to our modern delicacy, necessarily omitted. In contrast to the speech which has been quoted above, I will give in its entirety that of Frankford to his wife, commencing, "Go, bring my infants hither." (Here it was evidently intended that the maid should bring on the two children.) Frankford continues

O Nan, O Nan,
 If neither fear of shame, regard of honor,
 The blemish of my house, nor my deer love
 Could have withheld thee from so lewd a fact ;
 Yet for these infants, these young harmless souls,
 On whose white brows thy shame is character'd,
 And grows in greatness as they wax in years ;
 Look but on them, and melt away in tears.
 Away with them ; lest as her spotted body
 Hath stain'd their names with stripe of bastardy,
 So her adulterous breath may blast their spirits
 With her infectious thoughts. Away with them.

—PEARSON'S REPRINT, VOL. II., P. 140.

It will be seen that, according to the original play, the children were brought on in this scene ; and, though this is one of those details which, perhaps, might be " dangerous " in representation on the stage, it must be confessed that the omission of it somewhat impairs the pathetic effect of the scene.

One of the points that strikes everyone who reads " A Woman

Killed with Kindness," is the comparative ease and suddenness with which Anne Frankford yields to Wendoll's seduction; and this point is brought out, even more strongly, when the play is acted. It is much to the credit of so young an actress as Miss Webster, that she should have succeeded in making this defect in the construction of the play so little remarked by the audience. Her task was all the more difficult, because the gentleman responsible for the acting version had overlooked a manifest blunder in one of her most important speeches—a blunder which is perhaps worth noting, as a warning to those who rashly accept reprints of old plays as accurately representing the original. The speech, as it stands in the Dramatic Students' acting version, is as follows :

Oh! with what face of brass, what brow of steel,
Can you, unblushing, speak this to the face
Of the espous'd wife of so dear a friend?
It is my husband that maintains your state;
Will you dishonour him? *I am his wife,*
That in your power hath left his whole affairs.
It is to me you speak.

—ACT II., SC. 2, P. 19.

The last few lines should read thus :

Will you dishonour him that in your power
Hath left his whole affairs? *I am his wife,*
It is to me you speak.

The blunder, caused by the transposition of the words "I am his wife" into the wrong line, makes nonsense of the whole passage. But this by the way: as regards the facility with which Anne yields to the blandishments of Wendoll, Heywood has explained this apparent inconsistency in her character by two very clever touches. In Act III., Scene 3, p. 34, Anne says to Wendoll

Well, you plead custom,
That which for *want of wit* I granted erst,
I now must yield through fear.

This exactly describes the condition of a woman with no strength of character, who lends an ear to dishonourable proposals; and subsequently falls less from any desire to sin than from a want of prudence and courage in resisting the first downward step. Before she can realise what she has done, such a woman com-

promises herself, and foolishly thinks there is no retreat. One sees such cases in real life—alas! often enough: and one sees also many women who are clever enough to go very far, but who stop short at the last and most fatal step. Indeed, many such are adulteresses in heart, if not in deed: while those who are weak, like Anne Frankford, become adulteresses in deed; but never are so in heart. Another wonderful touch in Anne's character is that when appealing to her husband, even in the very height of her anguish, and sincerely remorseful as she is for her crime, she lets us see how vanity had got possession of her soul; I mean in that passage which must have struck many among the audience at the Olympic Theatre as dangerous inclining to bathos:—

even for His sake,
That hath redeem'd our souls, mark not my face,
Nor hack me with your sword; but let me go
Perfect and undeformed to my tomb.

—ACT III., SC. 3, P. 37.

That a woman crushed, as Anne Frankford is, by the agony of repentance, and sincerely loathing her sin, should yet be able, at such a moment, to think of the preservation of her beauty, is certainly at first sight astounding; but, on consideration, we find it very natural.

The character of Frankford is the only other one in the play which it is worth while to analyse. The openness and generosity of his nature are very forcibly drawn; and one must certainly allow Heywood the merit of great boldness in venturing to represent a husband, in that age of violence and brutal cruelty, as so patient and dignified under the greatest provocation that a man can suffer. His prayer for patience is repeated more than once; and though, in the original play, had he not been checked by the interposition of the maid-servant, he might probably, in the heat of his anger, have shed Wendoll's blood, the noble desire which he shows, when he has recovered his self-possession, not to pronounce any sentence against his guilty wife under the impulse of passion, but to be just and not revengeful, shows a very high conception of character on the part of the author. Although the blind confidence that Frankford reposes in Wendoll, and the comparatively slight hesitation which he shows in laying a trap for his wife, imperil, for a moment, the respect which one otherwise feels for him, he completely redeems these faults by the manliness of his

behaviour after the great blow has come upon him. Very beautiful are the words of forgiveness that he speaks to his wife :—

I see you are not, and I weep to see it,
My wife, the mother to my pretty babes !
Both those lost names I do restore thee back,
And with this kiss I wed thee once again.

—ACT V., SC. I., P. 48.

The character of Wendoll, even in the original play, is not very interesting. There is one touch omitted from the acting edition which deserves to be recorded. When this miserable traitor is suffering from remorse, he declares his intention to go and wander "like a Cain" in places where no report of his base ingratitude can be heard, and he concludes :—

And I divine (how ever now dejected)
My worth and parts being by some great man prais'd,
At my return I may in Court be rais'd.

—PEARSON'S REPRINT, Vol. II., P. 152.

Though these lines, if spoken, would undoubtedly have raised a laugh, they illustrate most forcibly the superficial nature of Wendoll's repentance. Anne has been weak enough in sinning, but, when once she has realised the hideousness of her sin, the depth and sincerity of her penitence cannot be doubted, and one feels confident she will sin no more. As to Wendoll, one feels equally confident that, if he can succeed in finding another dupe, he will repeat his treachery upon the first opportunity.

Considering the difficulties which necessarily beset young performers, and the indifferent version of the text from which they had to study their parts, I must say that I think the Dramatic Students deserved more generous treatment than they seemed to receive at the hands of some of the critics. No doubt the elocution, on the whole, was faulty ; but I have already pointed out how difficult Heywood's blank verse is to speak effectively, and some of the elocutionary defects may have arisen from a laudable desire to avoid the bad old style of spouting and ranting. The art of speaking blank verse is one which can only be acquired by constant practice. Every actor ought to study some Shakespearean blank verse for at least an hour every day ; having first mastered, of course under a proper instructor, a knowledge of the rhythm. Very few young actors nowadays can speak blank verse even tolerably, for the very simple reason that they never get any practice in that art ; and until we return to stock companies in

the provinces, which shall play once more the so-called legitimate drama, we shall never have any school of elocution worth a rap.

Mr. Fuller Mellish is a young actor of great earnestness, and is bound to make his mark ; but he must not be cast down if he finds that he cannot at once rise to the level required by such a part as Frankford. He is persevering as well as enthusiastic ; time and practice will bring that power of controlling the tones of his voice which at present he can scarcely be said to possess. It was plain that his heart was in his work ; and he, as well as Miss Webster, fairly earned the genuine, hearty applause with which the great scene in Act III. was received by the audience, many of whom, not ladies only, were moved to tears—and these are the best tribute which an actor can desire in such a part as Frankford. Miss Webster deserves the highest praise for her performance of Anne. Nothing could be better than the genuine self-abasement which she showed after the discovery of her infidelity. The only speech, to the rendering of which I must take exception, was the one in which she forbids the servants ever to name the name of mother to her children. There was a touch of hardness here which was certainly out of place ; but this would probably disappear when she became more at home in the part. Of the other performers it is not necessary to say much : they all seemed to do their best, and no one actor or actress, even in the smallest part, seemed to think that carelessness could add any grace to their efforts. Mr. Foss has not the mobility of feature requisite for such a part as Wendoll, which requires almost the grace and fervour of a Fechter to make it acceptable. Mr. Charrington as Sir Charles Mountford, seconded by Miss Ayrton as Susan Mountford, managed to invest the under-plot with some interest ; and Mr. Gilbert Trent, in the small part of Malby, produced a very favourable impression. The mounting of the piece was altogether superior to that which falls to the lot of most *matinee* performances. It is a pity, for the sake of both actors and audience, that a performance so interesting as that of “A Woman Killed with Kindness” cannot be repeated.

Our Musical-Box.

THE hideous intemperance of our national climate throughout the past month exercised a dismally depressing effect upon musical entertainments of the higher class. Snowstorms, adamantine frosts, bitter east winds and other malignant meteorological mockeries of spring shut up the "voice-box" of many a tuneful singer (I borrow this term from Messrs. Browne & Behnke's excellent Guide for Singers and Speakers, a sixth and cheap edition of which has just been published by Sampson Low & Co.), shook the nerves of instrumentalists, and indisposed the public to brave the terrors of the weather in search of recreation by night or day. To stop at home was the main desideratum of Londoners during the unusual furies of March, who not only "came in like a lion," but behaved himself throughout his whole term of office like a menagerie-full of exasperated carnivora. From the musician's point of view, I never remember so wicked a month as that which, happily, we have left behind us for aye. Bronchitis, influenza and paralysed extremities are not compatible with perfect efficiency in performers or pleasurable attention in audiences. Consequently concerts and opera in this Metropolis have not of late been attended by such indisputable success, pecuniary or artistic, as they would probably have achieved under climatic conditions of a more normally seasonable character. The vile weather cast a deadly chill upon every endeavour that was made by impresarii to provide music-lovers with their favourite recreation. Its baneful influence was felt with peculiar severity by those luckless ones who thronged Covent Garden Theatre on the opening night of Colonel Mapleson's Italian Opera *Stagione*, which combined great physical discomfort with moderate prices and a rendering of "La Traviata" productive of far more astonishment than delight to its half-frozen hearers. The house was even colder than charity is proverbially reputed to be; it displayed a great many curious varieties of "matter in the wrong place," and was moreover pervaded by a subtle reek of persistently neglected stable that conveyed to the discriminating nose a sense of inappropriateness, considered in connection with a temple of the lyric drama. As for the cast of the opera itself, it may not be inaptly defined as an infelicitous attempt to amalgamate inefficient novices and time-worn veterans into a satisfactory *ensemble*. The shivering audience, however, bore all its

tribulations with an unflagging good temper that was simply amazing under the circumstances. It is, of course, a matter of opinion whether or not such enterprises as "Colonel Mapleson's last" tend to improve the prospects of Italian Opera in this Metropolis. If any manager can resuscitate that moribund institution my energetic and freehanded friend, Augustus Harris, is he; and he means to try, as everybody knows, in the height of summertide, let the Dog Star do its utmost to empty town and deplete theatrical exchequers. But those who incline to regard the Covent Garden venture as a sign of the times say "Absit omen!" and I am one of them. In the meantime—to revert briefly to the evil deeds lately done at the great theatre in Bow Street—I am at a loss to understand how so "old a managerial hand" as Colonel Mapleson could so far ignore the advance in musical taste and judgment which has been made of late years by the London opera-going public as to engage for its delectation—and presumably with a view to lining his own pockets agreeably into the bargain—a considerable number of artists mainly characterised by vocal or dramatic incompetency, or both. Of his *débutantes*, two may be cited as examples of the shortcomings of all. The young lady with whom he "opened," in theatrical parlance, has learned to sing tolerably well, and has been taught the traditional gait and gestures of the typical tragedy heroine in a highly reprehensible manner. But her voice, which might be effective in the Avenue, or even the Comedy, is lost in so vast a house as Covent Garden. Hence, in the effort to make herself heard, she was compelled from time to time to put on an unnatural strain upon her vocal resources; and whenever she did so, she sang painfully out of tune, although it was obviously not "her nature to." The second novelty in the prima-donna line is, most emphatically, "very fine and large"—a quite magnificent young person, taller than Rosa Sucher and handsomer than Thérèse Malten. For stature, luxuriance of development, massiveness of form, the statue of Bavaria at Munich is not "in it" with her. She has a powerful, far-carrying voice, of good average German quality, trained as voices are trained nowadays—a mezzo-soprano that was meant to be a contralto, and would have fulfilled its original mission had it not been dragged upwards into a higher register with much labour and pains. But this splendid statuesque lady's intonation is as faulty as her figure is faultless, and no gazelle of the African desert has a more rudimentary knowledge of the dramatic art than she. In what her countrymen—quaintly enough to British apprehensions—call "detonation," she surpasses conjecture and puts experience to the rout. Nor is she singular in this respect. Indeed, throughout the initial performance of "La Favorita" at the Garden, the majority of the "principals" sang steadfastly too sharp or too flat, each after his or her kind, and the choruses followed suit with touching but misplaced loyalty to its

leaders. The result has been aptly described by Mr. Joseph Bennett as a very carnival of defective intonation. Meanwhile icy breezes swept through the auditorium, aggravating the shudders provoked by execrable untunefulness. No wonder that a travelled Englishman, one of the victims, should have exclaimed, "What sort of a people must we be, that these things can be done to us with impunity? Is it our good nature or our ignorance that restrains us from visiting such offences with condign punishment? Were we Italians, with a great vegetable market handy, what should we do to those who thus vex our ears? Were we Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards—even Russians—should we patiently submit to this outrage, for the commission of which our money has been taken? I trow not!"

Colonel Mapleson, fortunately for the public, has one good card to play in a curiously bad operatic hand. He has secured the services of Madame de Hesse-Wastegg (Minnie Hauk), who has at length returned to England, laden with additional honours, after a long absence from "Le Pays des Brouillards." The many British admirers of this accomplished singer and admirable actress will learn with pleasure that a few weeks ago, at the official instance of the director and professors of the Paris Conservatoire, the French Government conferred upon her the title and insignia of "Officier de l'Académie," in special recognition of her "distinguished services to French musical art" by the introduction into several European and American capitals of a number of French operas—*inter alia*, "Carmen," "Mignon," and "Marion." No vocal artist of transatlantic origin has ever heretofore received so high a meed of honour at the hands of France. Minnie Hauk's recent concert-tour through Holland has been described in the leading musical journals of the Continent as a series of "unparalleled triumphs," and it is further stated that her voice is even fuller and rounder than it was when last she visited Europe. I notice that Pauline Lucca, too, has lately been the recipient of a high distinction, bestowed upon her by the Regent of Bavaria—namely, the gold medal for Art and Science. Whilst on the subject of foreign musicians, I may observe that M. Saint Saëns has scored a splendid success in Paris with his new tragical opera, "Proserpine," produced on the 16th ult., and that he has announced his intention of coming to London next month to superintend in person the rehearsals for an orchestral concert which he proposes to give in St. James's Hall on the anniversary of Waterloo. During his sojourn in our Metropolis the Maestro will afford English dilettanti two opportunities of listening to his superb pianoforte playing, at "recitals." Bernhard Stavenhagen will not revisit our shores until the autumn, but Emil Sauret will be with us during the fashionable season. Meanwhile George Henschel, having

concluded his orchestral enterprise, is off to the States with his gifted wife, and will not resume his Vocal Recitals until the commencement of next year. Gounod is busy with the setting of a libretto by Jules Barbier, having for its subject Joan of Arc, and will probably complete his task by the end of this spring. Strauss, too, has found a "book" to suit him, after several unsuccessful experiments with comic libretti by eminent hands, and promises Vienna a new operetta some time during the coming summer. His collaborateur is a young dramatic author named Victor Leon, who made a hit last winter at Munich with a three-act absurdity hight "The Double." It is rumoured, moreover, that Richard Genée is engaged on a comic opera, the plot of which is scarcely less fantastic than that of "Ruddigore," which latter work, by the way, is in course of preparation—I believe, by Dr. Carlotta—for the Friedrich Wilhelm Theatre at Berlin. Mr. Fullerton's three-act opera "Waldemar" will follow "Dorothy" at the Prince of Wales's in the fulness of time. Misses. Florence Dysart and Grace Huntley are engaged for the important parts of Hildegarde, a Rhenish Landgravine, and Flip, an English waif; Mr. Hayden Coffin will undertake the title-rôle, especially composed for him by his fellow-countryman, Mr. Fullerton; Mr. Arthur Williams will sustain the eccentric character of Baron Otto von Piffelseltzer, a finiking Frenchified German sprig of nobility, and it appears not improbable that the part of Cunigonde, a bluff but melodious brigandess, will be entrusted to Madame Amadi. I have heard, but cannot guarantee the correctness of the statement, that the scenery is to be painted by Messrs. Beverley and Telbin, and that the costumes (which, to my knowledge, have been designed by Mr. Percy Anderson) will be executed in part by Madame Auguste. The American production of "Waldemar," as I understand, will be a magnificent one, supported by Miss Griswold, Madame Cottrelli, Mr. Perugini, and Mr. Oudin, the "quadrilateral" of McCaull's New York Company. The composition of the Boston and Philadelphia casts has not yet been made known to me.

"Musical Notes: A critical record of all musical events of importance during the past year," by Mr. Hermann Klein, supplies a want long felt by English professional and amateur musicians. It is a compendious but exhaustive work, teeming with clever and just criticisms of works and performances alike. Mr. Klein, himself a composer, writes with abundant knowledge of the art to which he belongs, and in a crisp, terse, and entertaining style. His useful and amusing annual is carefully indexed, and is, moreover, adorned by four excellent photographs of popular vocalists. I can confidently recommend this booklet (which is published by Messrs. Carson and Comerford) to the musical public.

A large collection of "novelties" (I "quote" the term because, with relation to the majority of the publications now before me, it is open to question), both instrumental and vocal, has reached me for review. In the hope that my humble judgment has not been disordered by the late east winds, as that of certain music-publishers seems to have been, if the quality of their recent productions be taken as a test of their mental condition, I will endeavour to deal fairly and equitably by these compositions. *Messrs. Chappell and Co.*—Mr. A. C. Mackenzie's new settings of three Shakespearean songs, "Is it thy will?" "Fair is my love," and "From the far Lavinian shore," are ingenious and musically, *cetera va sans dire*; but their melodies are scarcely "catching" enough to secure popularity, and their accompaniments are evidently calculated to sickly o'er the countenance of the drawing-room pianist with the pale cast of thought. In common with too many other clever composers of the day, Mr. Mackenzie writes his accompaniments for skilled executants—that is, for one amateur in a thousand—oblivious of the fact that a young lady who can play anything at all at sight, and who will take the trouble to study a really difficult accompaniment, is considerably rarer than a black swan. To be popular, a song must be easy to sing and easy to play; Mr. Mackenzie's songs fulfil neither of these essential conditions. Mr. Frederic Cowen, on the other hand, keeps the average vocalist and accompanist of middle-class society steadfastly in view whilst constructing his songs, whose name is legion. The two now before me, "Dusk" and "I wonder why," are plain-sailing melodies, fitted to intelligible verses written by Mr. Clifton Bingham, and will, I do not doubt, be received with general favour. The great merits of Mr. De Lara's "Garden of Sleep" (words by Mr. Clement Scott) have already been pointed out in this periodical. "Old Dreams" is a reprint of Mr. Cellier's successful ballad, "Queen of my Heart," which Hayden Coffin has turned into a gold-mine; the new words are written, "for the use of ladies only," by Sarah Dowdney, and poetically express a pretty and sympathetic thought. *Messrs. Chappell and Co.*'s new pianoforte music does not call for any special praise or blame. It is as innocuous as Revalenta Arabica or Thorley's Food for Cattle, and comprises "Summer Dreams," by J. F. Kendall; a minuet by Gounod and another by Cellier; and three dances (two "Pepitas" and one "Aurora") by Bucalossi—the two former expensively illustrated. *Mr. Joseph Williams.*—Under the auspices of this enterprising publisher, two more of M. Roubier's light and airy plagiarisms are given to the world, which I hope is duly grateful for the benefaction. "Le Menuet Prophète" and "Les Noces d'Or" are equally void of originality and offence. Mr. John Adcock stands accountant for a harmless P. F. solo, light "Marche Antique," and for an arrangement (violin and P. F.) of the "March of the Men of Harlech," both suitable to the schoolroom, as are "Two Sketches for Violin and

Piano," composed by Mr. Lightwood, an arrangement from "Erminie" by Mr. Turner, and an operatic fantasia or air from "Masaniello" by Mr. Palmer. "Metal more attractive" to young folks, however, than is contained in the foregoing carefully manufactured articles will be found in a set of twelve songs, written and composed for "children of all ages" by Messrs. Pottinger Stephens and Florian Pascal. There is good honest fun in several of these lyrics—notably in "The Insatiable Ape" and "The Mechanical Curate," whilst the tunes with which they have been deftly fitted are unpretentious and pleasing. The parents and guardians of musical youngsters will do well to purchase this cheery little *recueil* of lays, in which sentiment alternates with humour, while patriotism is not forgotten. *Mr. William Czerny.*—At the very head and front of this publisher's novelties must be placed a perfectly beautiful setting of Longfellow's "Stars of the Summer Night," by Edward Lassen. Well sung by either tenor or soprano, this lovely song cannot fail to achieve a great public success. M. Wekerlin's "'Tis now the Month of Flowers" and Herr Schröeter's "Happy Days" both deserve favourable mention, the former for its cleverness, the latter for its simple tunefulness. I cannot say as much for M. Wekerlin's "Birds of Balmy Woodland" and "On the Sunny Main," written in a method happily long exploded, and saddled with wearisome burdens of "Tra la la" and "Ah, ah, ah"; nor for Herr Bradsky's "My All-in-all," which is curiously mawkish and commonplace. Herr Oscar Wagner has adapted sacred words, "O Salutaris Hostia," to a Bach Prelude, following Gounod's example, but a long way behind that consummate melodist. An Andantino from one of the late Friedrich Kiel's Organ Suites (opus 77) is replete with grand solemnity and noble transitions of harmony. It has been ably arranged for the piano and violin by Mr. Czerny himself. Herr Bachmann's "Trois Petites Esquisses" and "Intermezzo" for the piano have obviously been written for juvenile students of that instrument, to whom they will be welcome by reason of their easiness. To this category of composition belongs an "Impromptu" by F. W. Hird. More ambitious, but less meritorious, are Mr. Rickard's fantasia "Ectade" and M. Nollet's barcarolle "Brise du Soir." Herr Ercmann is the author of a "Hungarian Hussar-March," the character of which is entirely at variance with its title, and of an "Andantino varié" (whatever that may be besides a barbarism), to which he has given the suggestive name of "Resignation." Unqualified praise and admiration will be accorded by every cultivated musician to Mr. Hubert Parry's masterly "Partita in D Minor" for violin and P.F., than which nothing more vigorous and wholesome of its kind has been written for many a day. Several P.F. duets by M. Wekerlin—Ländlers, Minuets, and Valses—will assuredly recommend themselves to young pianists, being fairly melodious and agreeably free from technical difficulties. Schuller of Coburg, Schulze of Leipzig, and Weekes of

Hanover Street may be applied to with confidence for Mr. Herbert Dering's new waltz, "Murielle," which contains three well-marked *motivi*, all good "dancing" tunes. I understand that this waltz will be heard at the next Court ball.

CLAVICHORD.



Our Omnibus=Box.

The custom of giving important plays a trial trip in the country was not unknown in the year 1830. Early in that year Macready produced for the first time Lord Byron's tragedy called "Werner; or, the Inheritance," at Bristol first and subsequently at Bath. Geneste, whose record of plays ends in 1830, does not give the Bristol date, but says that "it had been acted at Bristol with applause." It was very well received at Bath on February 10, 1830. Macready as Werner was supported by Mason (Ulric), Stuart (Gabor), Ayliffe (Stralenheim), Mrs. Ashton (Ida), and Mrs. Usher (Josephine). The Bath scenery was evidently execrable, for it is said, "When Gabor entered in the secret passage everything was spoilt for want of a proper scene, for Stuart entered through a lofty arch." The original play, that was never intended for the stage by Lord Byron, was of course far too long, and Macready shortened some parts judiciously, and himself added the character of Ida, who is not in the original tragedy. Nothing, however, according to the critics of Bath, could excuse Macready's change of catastrophe. Lord Byron makes Ulric rush off the stage and we see no more of him, but Macready makes Ulric re-enter in custody. According to the learned critic of Bath, "he stands at the back of the stage, says nothing, and only looks a fool." This, unfortunately, has been the fate of many a tragic actor before and since. "Werner" was brought to London the same year, and played at Drury Lane in December, 1830, with the following cast :—

Werner	...	...	MACREADY	Baron Stralenheim	H. WALLACK
Ulric	...	...	WALLACK	Josephine ...	MRS. FAUCET
Gabor	...	...	COOPER	Ida ...	MISS MORDAUNT

I have turned back to *The News* of 1830, which contains the best criticism of that time, though I do not think Leigh Hunt criticised "Werner" in that paper. Whoever did so made a strange mistake when he compared Macready as Werner to Rembrandt's beautiful picture of "A Banished Noble." Surely the critic must have meant

Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Banished Lad" in the National Gallery. Macready's Werner mantle fell upon Samuel Phelps, who first played the part at Sadler's Wells in 1844, and it was a favourite character in his *répertoire*. It was in this play that he introduced to the stage his son Edmund Phelps in the character of Ulric. On the 19th of June Mr. Henry Irving will appear as Werner for the first time on the occasion of the benefit performance for the "Westland Marston Testimonial Fund." A new acting version of "Werner" has been prepared under the direction of Mr. Irving, who will produce the play with as much completeness as if it were prepared for a long run. Lord Byron writes to Mr. Murray from Ravenna on October 9th, 1821:—"Don't forget to send me my first act of 'Werner' (if Hobhouse can find it amongst my papers. Send it by the post to Pisa; and also cut out Harriet Lee's 'German's Tale' from the 'Canterbury Tales,' and send it in a letter also. I began that tragedy in 1815." (Mem.: it was not produced until 1830.) Somehow or other "Werner" was very nearly lost in the post, and Byron began to be very fidgety about it, but at last it turned up, much to the author's delight. He writes from Pisa to Mr. Moore in March, 1822:—"I am sorry you think 'Werner' even *approaching* to any fitness for the stage, which with my notions upon it is very far from my present object. With regard to the publication, I have already explained that I have no exorbitant expectations of either fame or profit in the present instances, but wish them published because they are written, which is the common feeling of all scribblers." And then he goes on to discuss religion *apropos* of "Werner," whose character appeared to have "frightened everybody." Says Byron, "I am no enemy to religion, but the contrary. As a proof I am educating my natural daughter a strict Catholic in a convent at Romagna, for I think people can never have *enough* of religion if they are to have any. I incline myself very much to the Catholic doctrines, but if I am to write a drama I must make my characters speak as I conceive them likely to argue."

It is a difficult matter to put your finger on any exact date of modern theatrical history that is not covered by the life of a celebrated actor or some handy compilation. From the year 1860 until the publication of THE THEATRE MAGAZINE AND DRAMATIC NOTES we have to plunge through a vast plain or desert without any protecting sign-post. The question came up the other day when Phelps really played Werner for the last time. As far as could be judged by "The Life of Samuel Phelps," by W. May Phelps and Forbes Robertson, the last time he played Werner was at Sadler's Wells on 21st November, 1860, when his son, Edmund Phelps, made his *début* as Ulric. "The Life of Phelps" is silent as to any subsequent performance of "Werner" at Drury Lane under the Chatterton management. Mr. John Cole-

man's "Life of Phelps," that professes to give every single performance of Phelps at Drury Lane, taken down from the lips of Mr. Chatterton, never says a word about any performance of "Werner." At last, however, with the aid of a file of old newspapers, I have discovered that Phelps played Werner twice more after the year 1860. He appeared as the hero of Lord Byron's tragedy for the occasion of his benefit on Wednesday evening, March 21, 1865. The cast was as follows :—

Werner	...	...	MR. PHELPS.	Gabor	...	...	HENRY MARSTON.
Ulric	...	...	EDMUND PHELPS.	Josephine	...	...	MISS ATKINSON.

"Werner" was repeated on the following evening at Drury Lane, and this was actually the very last performance of the tragedy in London. It must have been at this last or "off night" that "Werner" was played to only £15 at Old Drury. It is impossible to believe that the benefit of Phelps only realised that pitiful sum when he was playing one of his finest characters. But even that is scarcely a fair criterion of the drawing powers of "Werner," which was brought out at the fag end of the season in a week of miscellaneous and benefit performances, and was never intended to be produced for "a run." In fact, after that benefit week, Phelps did not appear again in London until the following September, when he opened in "King John," and Bayle Bernard's "Faust and Margaret" was produced in the October following. During the next two years there is no record of "Werner" having been presented, and Phelps certainly never repeated the character after the death of his son Edmund in April, 1870. But these and all other matters of a kindred nature will all be adjusted when we get that valuable book for which we are all waiting so anxiously—the "Memoirs" of my dear old friend E. L. Blanchard, who is at present a walking encyclopædia of theatrical facts.

Mr. Lewis Waller made his first bow to a London audience four years ago, and in a character similar to the one he has just now so successfully assumed at the Strand Theatre—that of a handsome, scheming young villain, who is enamoured of beauty and innocence, and endeavours to ruin the fair possessor of these virtues. In the interim which has since elapsed Mr. Waller played the Hon. Claude Lorrimore and commenced to play Roy Carlton, this young actor has done plenty of good work. He played a round of juvenile parts with Mr. Toole in London and the provinces; he then started on a lengthened tour of "Called Back" from the Prince's Theatre, earning much praise for his powerful rendering of Gilbert Vaughan. Succeeding this came his tour with Modjeska, to whose Rosalind Mr. Waller played Orlando. This character, and that of Sir Edward Mortimer in "Mary Stuart," were his most successful impersonations during the engagement. Mdme. Modjeska offered to take Mr. Waller to

America as her leading man, but he, perhaps preferring to wait and do more work in his own country before visiting another, declined. The engagement which followed immediately after this was with Mr. Henry Neville, and in "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," wherein Mr. Waller played Jem Dalton. This carried him on to the commencement of the tour of "Dark Days," taken into the principal provincial towns, from the Haymarket Theatre, by Miss Florence West. In "Dark Days" Mr. Waller, of course, played the leading part, receiving favourable criticisms for his earnest and impassioned acting as Basil North. At one or two *matinées* given lately of original plays, Mr. Waller has shown us how sympathetic he can be in heroic parts, and, although he is effective enough in the villain's part he plays just now to earn the hisses of the audience, we hope and believe that he will ere long appear before us in strong, romantic parts, for which he seems eminently suited.

"The Mormon," one of the class of farcical comedies which are really farces in three acts, was produced at the Vaudeville on Thursday afternoon, March 10, and certainly raised a great deal of laughter. Mr. Calthorpe, the author, causes his hero to appear to be married to three wives, and the scrapes that he gets into in consequence of his apparent "trigamy," and the clever way in which he extricates himself from his troubles, produce the fun. But I think the author's thanks are mainly due to the excellent acting of Mr. Charles Glenney as the rattle-pate Charles Nugent, to Mr. Fred Thorne for his amusing assumption of a proud, irascible, and stingy Highlander, and to Miss Emily Thorne as a vulgar, wealthy widow. A good word must also be said for Mr. Fuller Mellish and Mr. E. M. Robson. On the same day a very pathetic and powerful little one-act play, by Henry Byatt, and which he has named "The Brothers," created genuine applause, and at once took rank as far above the average of afternoon productions. The story is a simple one, merely that of a young fellow, Richard Johnstone, who leaves his home, entrusting his sweetheart, to whom he means to propose on his return from his cruise, to the care of his elder brother, William. The girl has only looked upon the sailor as a playmate, and so falls in love and marries his brother. They are happy until, in an evil moment, William speculates, loses not only his own but his wife's money, and, just as he is racking his mind as to how he shall tell his wife the sorry news, his brother returns, ignorant of the blow that has been struck him during his absence, and by his hearty greeting and joyous hopes of the future brings home to William the baseness of his conduct. The scene in which Richard discovers that all his future is wrecked, and his passionate anger at first, are finely worked out, as is the reconciliation brought about by the appearance of Kitty, for whose sake Richard nobly conceals the weak if not wicked conduct of her hus-

band. Mr. Yorke Stephens as Richard Johnstone acted splendidly—so happy and light-hearted in the commencement, and afterwards tempering his indignation with sorrow in such a masterly manner. Mr. Royce Carleton's self-abasement and contempt at his own meanness were also powerfully delineated. Miss Lillian Gilmore was fresh and charmingly natural as the young wife. It was altogether an excellent performance.

Our Melbourne correspondent writes:—The month now past, January, has been a happy one for the majority of our managers. The public have responded liberally to their efforts; the weather has been, in the main, favourable; and the critics have been more good-natured than is their wont. Christmas can soften even a theatrical reporter. The only pantomime we have had this year was "Robinson Crusoe," at the Theatre Royal, which was placed on the stage with Messrs. Williamson, Garner, and Co.'s usual liberality. The "book" is the work of Mr. Alfred Maltby, and it must be said that it might have been much better. Mr. Maltby also localised the pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, arranged its production, and designed the dresses for "Robinson Crusoe." Probably, having so much work on his hands, he could not give our pantomime the attention he desired. Mr. William Elton is the backbone of it as Mrs. Crusoe, and Miss Ada Lee is an effective Polly. Mr. William Brunton's transformation scene, "The Garden of the Ocean," has received liberal praise. The pantomime will be played for the last time to-morrow, February 4, and on the following night Mr. George Rignold and Miss Kate Bishop open in a sensational drama, in six acts, "Siberia," written by Mr. Bariley Campbell, and intended to show the persecutions of the Jews in Russia during 1879.

Mr. Rignold has been on a tour in the country, with good results, except at Sandhurst, where he raised the prices and the ire of the public. That glorious burlesque, "Little Jack Sheppard," was the Boxing-night attraction at the Opera House, and it is still running to full houses. Miss Fanny Robina as Jack, Mr. R. Brough as Jonathan Wild, and Mr. E. W. Royce as Blue-skin are prime favourites, and they are ably assisted by an excellent company and a fine orchestra, under the *bâton* of Mr. F. Stanislaus. "The Forty Thieves," your Drury Lane success, is to be the next production. The new Princess Theatre, a marvel of beauty and comfort, has been given over to revivals of Gilbert and Sullivan opera. "The Mikado," "Iolanthe," "Pirates of Penzance," and "Patience" have also had their turn. Miss Nellie Stewart, the *prima donna*, takes a farewell benefit to-morrow, February 5, in "The Mikado," prior to a twelvemonth's absence from the stage, during

which she will visit Europe for the purposes of study. Mr. A. Cellier, the popular conductor at this house, speaks highly of Miss Stewart's ability. On February 6 "Billee Taylor" will be revived for a few nights, and Miss Julia Sidney will make her first appearance in opera as Phœbe. "Billee Taylor" has recently had a long run in Sydney. The Alexandra Theatre has been given over to an Italian Opera company, who have been playing the old favourites with much pecuniary success. The only novelty was Donizetti's "Roberto Devereux," and we did not particularly care for it.

On Boxing-night Mr. George Darrell, a well-known colonial author and actor, produced a new drama, "The New Rush," at the Bijou Theatre. The piece was well constructed, and acted by a company which included the names of Miss Nina Boucicault and Messrs. Phil Beck, Walter Everard, G. L. Gordon, and the author. The plot was entirely colonial, and stirring enough, but it was produced at a bad time, and had only a short run. It was followed by "The Soggarth," an Irish drama, by the same author, which, on its production in Sydney, was the subject of some controversy, a colonial writer claiming the plot as his own, and Mr. Darrell asserting that the main incident was suggested by a recitation, "Father Roach," heard at your Garrick Club. "The Soggarth" lingered for a few nights, and last Saturday Mr. Phil Day revived the eccentric comedy, "Mixed." Mr. Walter Craven claims to be the author of this piece, and endeavoured to obtain an injunction stopping its performance on February 1. It was asserted at the hearing that Mr. Craven was only author by purchase, and that "Mixed" really was Dove and Maltby's "Three Hats." Mr. Phil Day was ordered to enter into a bond to pay any judgment which might go against him if the case were carried into the Supreme Court, and the matter dropped.

The Victoria Hall, St. George's Hall, Nugget Theatre, and Apollo Hall are all occupied by variety companies of more or less note. In Sydney they have "The Sleeping Beauty" at the Theatre Royal, to be followed, on February 5, by Miss Carrie Swain, a clever American actress of the Lottà type. "Dick Whittington" was the Standard pantomime, and they are now playing "Lady Audley's Secret" at that house. Miss Minnie Palmer has been doing powerful business at the Opera House, and Mr. John R. Rogers has been writing to the papers clearly proving that "My Sweetheart" is the only kind of entertainment anyone ought to care to see. Rabid sensation has lately been the aim of the Gaiety Theatre, culminating in "Neck for Neck," in which a man is hung, with real drop and fixings, on the stage.

Adelaide has been poorly provided with amusements of late. Miss Carrie Swain essayed a season at Christmas in "The Tomboy," an eccentric drama in which she turns somersaults, but without much success. The Academy of Music was burnt down on Christmas-eve for the third time in three years. Mr. Harry St. Maur had just secured a lease of it. Mr. St. Maur opens in Brisbane on February 14 with "The Candidate"; "Lady Clare" follows, with Mrs. Digby Wyloughby in the title rôle; while "Jim the Penman" and "The Great Divorce Case" conclude the season. From thence he goes to Sydney, playing a farewell season there and with us; New Zealand follows, and then he contemplates a tour to India and the East. Mr. Wybert Reeve and our Theatre Royal comedy company, with Messrs. G. W. Anson and A. Maltby, are the principal attractions on tour in New Zealand. Mr. W. Holloway and Miss Essie Jempis are playing a successful season at Hobart, Tasmania.

On Saturday, March 19th, the Whittington D.S. gave a performance at St. George's Hall, the interest being centred in the production of a little drama in one act, "Hard Lines," given for the first time, and from the pen of one of the members, Mr. Charles Dickinson. The plot is simple enough. The scene is laid in the cottage of Robert Stow, an old miner, near the Glen Abor Coal Mine. His daughter Jessie, almost since her childhood, has been betrothed to George Arnold, a young miner, who has loved her devotedly all his life; but especially so since the day when she found him drinking and swearing with his mates, and on her words of gentle reproof he swore to leave off his bad habits, and become a hard-working, honest man. George has kept his word, but Jessie has unwisely been sent away for a time, to be benefitted by a better education than her father could give her at home. On her return she feels dissatisfied with the old surroundings. She now has a secret that makes a misery of her young life. During her absence she has made the acquaintance of Percy Dunnington, the overseer of the mine. Percy has fallen in love with her, honestly so, and she, poor girl, finds that the love she fancied she felt for George was only sisterly affection, and that her heart has gone out of her keeping into that of Percy. She has not the courage to undeceive George, yet this must be done for she cannot marry him. Percy undertakes the task, but it is not from him that the cruel awakening comes. George's best friend, Giles, who has been suspecting the truth, picks up a photograph of Percy, dropped from Jessie's pocket, which has these words written on the back, "To my dear little wife that is to be." He shows this to George, who is pretty nigh heart-broken at the discovery. Suddenly there is a cry that the cage in one of the shafts has broken down, and that two miners are lying in danger at the bottom of the pit. Percy rushes to the rescue, but is reported to have fainted below; he is in imminent

danger of being suffocated, but the miners, who unjustly dislike him, refuse to go down. Distracted with terror, Jessie comes to George, and in broken accents tells him that if he will only save the man she loves she will give him up and be his slave for life. "No," answers George, "I hate him. Let him die." In the name of his dead mother Jessie appeals to his better feelings, and he is conquered. Percy is saved, but as George is being pulled up the rope breaks, and the mates who go down to him only bring back a dying man. His last words are tender forgiveness for Jessie, and to make Percy swear that the life he has just given back to him shall be entirely dedicated to her happiness. Thus ends the play. Jessie will marry the man she loves best; but as she has cast away a generous noble heart a shadow will rest on her future life, the remembrance that it was broken for her sake. This touching little story is neatly put together, and feelingly told in homely language that has a true ring in it. That the audience were pleased and interested was shown, not by the applause and call for the author which came as a matter of course, but by the deep attention given to the unfolding of the little story. Mr. Dickenson, with one exception, was fortunate with his interpreters. Mr. P. A. Roberts seemed ill at ease as Percy Dunnington, but Mr. J. L. Morgan was a good Robert Stow, and Mr. Guildford Dudley a very good Giles. As George Arnold, the strong young miner, who is quick in knocking a man down when he speaks ill of his lass, but who can be so gentle and tender to the woman he loves, Mr. Arthur Ayers acted admirably, showing both power and pathos. Mrs. Arthur Ayres (Miss Annie Woodyell) was also excellent as Jessie, her impersonation being full of feeling and earnestness. Both the acting and the play achieved an undoubted success. It was followed by "The Guv'nor," capitably acted by Mr. W. T. Clark, who, however, should beware of exaggeration. Mr. Walter Bramall was exceedingly good as Freddy, and Mr. Frank Bacon was easy and natural as Theodore. The Butler had a first-rate representative in Mr. Guilford Dudley, while the Old Macclesfield of Mr. Walter Barnard is certainly one of the very best things he has ever done. The rest of the cast comprised Messrs. G. P. Bond, L. Marcus, John L. Morgan, W. A. Mahony, M. Lewis, Miss Lillian Welter, Miss Etty Williams, Miss Graham, whose acting does not call for any special comment. Mrs. Newton Phillips was a good Mrs. Macclesfield.

A pleasant hour may be wiled away amongst the capital little collection of pictures which is at present on view at the French Gallery, Pall Mall. The walls are, perhaps, hardly so closely covered as usual, but the high standard of excellence to which Messrs. Wallis have accustomed us is once again fully maintained. The pictures which will most probably attract the greater number of "those who know" will be "The Council of Peace" and "The Hour of Recreation," both

by Hohnberg. In both cases, three High Church dignitaries are deep in literature, and though the spring pictures are apt to suffer through the tendency of east winds to sharpen criticism, he would indeed be hard to please who could find any serious fault in the treatment of either the clean-shaven characteristic faces, the rich colouring of the priestly habits, or the careful manipulation of detail. Two landscapes by Poschinger, which are quite as beautiful in their way, will prove more popular with the generality of the picture-viewers. "The weary sun hath made a golden set" is equally descriptive of either, but an "October Evening" is, perhaps, the finer work. The treatment follows closely on the lines of Leader, and the long stretch of sedgy land, which culminates in the clump of trees in the background, through the spreading foliage of which pours the full radiance of the setting sun, will be found apt to linger in the memory.

Meissonier is represented by one work only—"The Smoker," which is a replica of the principal figure in his celebrated "Sign-Painter." The meditative stillness of the face and figure shows the great master in his happiest mood, and the many admirers of the original will be glad to renew their acquaintance with "The Smoker," over whom so many tongues have waxed eloquent. "The Reconciliation" between Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds when the former was on the point of death is the subject of Seiler's more important contribution; this is in the upper room and should not be missed; and Karl Heffuer's "On the road to Ostia, Italy," is also worthy of study. Amongst the smaller pictures, one little gem should not be overlooked. It is called "Pleasant Pages," and Kronberger is the artist. It is just the half-length of an old man poring over a book; but the keen interest on the lined old face, the white silky hair half-hidden by the velvet skull cap, the sunlight which burnishes the flowing locks to silver, and shows redly through the thinner part of the ear, are several artistic touches which go towards a very perfect whole.

Taken as a whole, McLean's Gallery is, perhaps, somewhat disappointing. In "The Fern Gatherer," Millais is far from his best, Leader has given us better work than in his "Quiet Pool," and neither Faed nor Schmalz are up to their usual pitch of excellence; but there are some fine pictures in the cosy little gallery, which, even if exhibited separately, would well repay a visit. Peter Graham is too perfect an artist in his own groove to justify any complaints against its monotony, and certainly he is at his finest in the two present works, "Highland Cattle," and "The Haunt of the Sea Gulls." The purpling heather stretching over the moorland, the rough coated

cattle, the lowering clouds, the glint of sunshine which almost seems to brighten as one looks—these things are as vivid and actual as the memories they recall; while in the second picture the artist has caught the spirit of the waves dashing over the sunken rocks in a fashion that few can rival. "The Tiff," by John Pettie, is a clever little character picture which will win a smile from the sourest of critics; while "The Pastime of their Old Age," by de Jans, is a bright little representation of a Darby and Joan over their cards. The puzzled frown on the man's rough face, and the gleeful expression on the old Biddy's in-drawn lips, is exceedingly good, and on the minor details much care has been expended. To a fine work by Rosa Bonheur is accorded the place of honour. A party of wild boars foraging in the fern-clad forest is given with characteristic force and fidelity, and Messrs. McLean may be congratulated on securing such a picture, which, it may be added, has never before been exhibited.

The "Mermaid Series," published by Vizetelly and Co. in a neat and handy form, containing the best plays of the old dramatists, is a boon to all who make a study of the literature of the stage. It was for some time a reproach that the plays of the forefathers of the stage were so difficult to obtain in an easy and readable form. The volume just published, and containing the following plays of Christopher Marlowe—viz., "Tamburlaine the Great," "The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus," "The Jew of Malta," and "Edward the Second"—is very welcome, and not the less on account of the introduction by Mr. J. A. Symonds, and the critical essay by Mr. Havellock Ellis. But surely it is a sorry thing to see a defence put forward for the filthy and loathsome blasphemies of Marlowe here printed and set forth in the appendix. The note is enough to make anyone shudder, and it is scarcely to be wondered that a misguided creature who could pen such infamous words and pretend to hold such execrable opinions was slain amidst courtesans and demireps, killed outright by a serving man, a rival in a quarrel over "bought kisses," and that he was buried like a dog in an unknown spot beneath the grey towers of St. Nicholas. Any service of religion would have been an outrage over the body of a man who cursed the God Who created him, and blasphemed against the Holy Ghost.

As "One of the Crowd" and "The Amateur Casual," James Greenwood is a name well known and popular. Who has not read his interesting well-written articles, whether they have appeared in newspapers or book form? Mr. Greenwood, in the capacity of a mimic, is less well known, but his ability in this character deserves a few words of notice. Mr. Greenwood has of late been giving a series of readings from his own works for the benefit of Outcast Haven,

that sympathetic charitable institution under the direction of Mr. Walter Austin. I attended the one at Kensington, and spent a most pleasant evening. Mr. Greenwood reads with much feeling, in turn moving his audience to tears or to laughter, his powers of mimicry being especially good, realising to the life the characters he describes. As an entertainment, the lecture deserved praise, and the motive which prompted Mr. Greenwood to give it all one's sympathy.

Despite the continued success of her Californian tour, Madame Trebelli intends returning to London early in May. Music lovers would be truly happy if the great and popular contralto could be persuaded to accept an operatic engagement this season.

I have received the following eloquent letter from an American lady well-known in artistic circles, and who has music in her pen as in her voice :—

The Americans *en masse* have a most intense love for Shakespeare. They do not temper it with a puerile admiration, nor a pedantic affectation of criticism. No! It is a simple loving worship that the great American heart lays on the shrine of the immortal Bard of Avon. Shakespeare and the Bible are companions on the family table of every home, from the high to the lowly. I remember an August that I passed "camping out" in the Adirondach Mountains. For days we had not seen a human dwelling. One glorious evening we came upon a cabin nestled among the fragrant firs. The owner, a great brawny mountaineer, rushed out eagerly to see such an unusual cavalcade, and gave us a hearty invitation to rest awhile. He plied us with questions about the world so far below and so far away. We asked him if he ever saw a paper now and then?

"Noo," he said, "I ain't seed a paper fur nigh onto two year. That's all the only readin' I does," taking from a shelf a rudely-printed well-thumbed volume of Shakespeare! And here we found, in this rugged worker of the mountain-wilds, as deep an appreciation of the grandeur of Lear, the beauty of Juliet, as in the most fastidious scholar.

Forrest and the elder Booth, the pioneers of the American stage, made Shakespeare its corner stone. They walked the boards to the rhythm of his noble verse, and trained the untutored mind of the public to a standard from which it has never fallen. No season, even in the humblest theatrical town, is complete without a leaven of the Shakespearean Drama. Wise managers know this so well that they never attempt to deprive their patrons of their favourite dish in the theatrical *menu*, for have it they must, with or without salt. From the school of Shakespeare all our great players have sprung. It gave us the splendour of Charlotte Cushman's Lady Macbeth; the chaste beauty of Mary Anderson's Juliet; the classical Hamlet

of Booth; the sublime interpretation of Coriolanus and Othello by the gifted but unfortunate John McCullough. In fact, every name famous on the American stage has reflected the glory of the great bard. Every few years is marked by some magnificent revival. "The Midsummer Night's Dream" was revived in Cincinnati, the Queen City of the West, many years ago, with a lavish splendour before unknown. In 1875 all New York went wild with enthusiasm, and for months thronged Booth's Theatre, to witness the gorgeous spectacle of "King Henry the Fifth." The battle scene was one of amazing realism. How the old theatre used to ring with applause, and the curtain rise again and again on that sublime stage picture!

But one of the most remarkable revivals was that of the "Comedy of Errors" at the Star Theatre, New York, in 1885. To weave the thin thread of the comedy into a fabric rich in the most sumptuous stage pictures was marvellous indeed. The incident of a shipwreck was the loop through which was drawn a scenic prologue, entitled "The Wreck of the Trirema," as Ægeon so graphically describes in his speech before the tribunal of the Duke in Scene 1:—

For ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues
We were encounter'd by a mighty rock.

* * * * *

The sailors sought for safety by our boat,
And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us.

As the curtain rose, a darkness rested on the scene. Soon a faint gleam of rosy dawn broke over it, deepening and brightening, revealing the sea rearing its white-capped waves against a mighty rock and dashing the helpless wreck with its cruel crest. Nothing more exquisite in stage mechanism could be imagined. The fact that the time of the play is supposed to be in the second century, gives full scope for the introduction of all the gorgeousness of Asiatic costumes, furniture, and architecture. That the plot is laid in Ephesus, recalls the worship of Diana of the Ephesians, and thus is brought on a most interesting and magnificent pageant of the priests and priestesses of her Temple, with the choir of vestals and acolytes, Ionian flutists, Egyptian harpers, curators of the Temple, heralds, and Prætorian guards. When Antipholus of Ephesus is debarred his own door, and cries—

Since my own doors refuse to entertain me,
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me—

his speech is made the prelude to the introduction of the Villa of the Courtesan Phryne.

I do not think in the annals of the stage there has ever been a scene that excels this in sensuous beauty of colour, light, form, and sound. Tapestries and skins of the richest hues are scattered over the mosaic floor. Columns of tinted marble support canopies of gaily

embroidered and bespangled lace. Palms and brilliant flowers drink in the freshness of fountains of sparkling waters. On tripods burn lamps of perfumed oil. Genuine negroes, selected for their symmetry of outline, and draped in scarlet tunics, perform the part of slaves-in-waiting. In the midst of this voluptuous scene, on sumptuous couches, recline Phryne and her guests, Antipholus and the Jeweller. She calls for her singing slave, and a beautiful blonde woman appears. As she poses, every movement of her body lending grace to the clinging draperies, and singing of "Love, love, nothing but love," she looks as though she had just stepped from Makart's canvas, so perfect a blending is she of delicious colouring. The lovely song ended, the singer sinks on a couch, and Cupid enters to herald the dance of the Bacchantes. They troop in, clashing their cymbals, swaying and bending to the rhythm of the music, with ravishing effect; and as the curtain shuts out this exquisite scene, one sighs to think it cannot be both "a thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever."

Through all this superb splendour of spectacle and poetical beauty of scene, the action of the play stands out clearly defined. The Dromios of Stuart Robson and Wm H. Crane are quaintly humorous creations, as much alike as two peas in a pod, and to these excellent comedians is due the honour of this splendid revival. For years they had played in it together, its success achieved by their work as the Dromios. They grew to love it, and it became their dream to revive it with all the perfection that taste and money could command. A dream fully realised that night at the Star Theatre, when the green curtain descended on "The Comedy of Errors."

It was stated in "The Daily Telegraph" several weeks ago that the management of the Olympic Theatre had in contemplation, for a *matinée* performance, an English adaptation of Sardou's "Comtesse de Sommerive," a play that failed several years ago at the Gymnase, in Paris. This sombre and ghastly drama has never been played in England, but a version of it was at one time popular in America, written by Mr. Augustin Daly, and called "Alixé." The acting of Clara Morris in "Alixé" made a powerful impression on several English actresses, notably on Adelaide Neilson, who was always proposing to produce "Alixé," but never did so. "Alixé" has remained on the shelf ever since, and there it would probably have remained had not Mr. Richard Davey, once the dramatic critic of the New York "Spirit of the Times," proposed to unearth "Alixé," and bring it out at an Olympic *matinée*, for the sake of exploiting the talent or the capacity of certain actresses he had in his mind. The idea of a version of the "Comtesse de Sommerive" never entered the heads of any but three people—Mr. Davey, Miss Hawthorne, and Miss Sophie Eyre. These are the facts; now for the fiction. A dramatic print had the effrontery to state in its editorial columns that

the consideration of Sardou's useless, hopeless, and impossible play was being forced on the attention of the Olympic management by one who had as little idea of taking it into consideration as the editor of the twaddle in question. Furthermore, the false statement was coloured by some gratuitous impertinences about high prices and by other instances of that feminine spleen that does much more harm to the accuser than the accused. It is needless to state here that there was not one scintilla of truth, not one vestige or shadow of a foundation for any such baseless and inexcusable fabrication. The gentleman who was accused of forcing a hopeless play on the Olympic management had never been consulted about Sardou's old drama, had never suggested it, had never dreamed of wasting his time over such useless material, and had never faltered in his opinion that wherever "*La Comtesse de Sommerive*" is produced in this country, whether as "*Alixé*" or under any other title, it will most assuredly fail. Had his opinion been asked—which it was not—he would have said, put "*La Comtesse de Sommerive*," behind the fire, for such a play has no chance in this country.

Several correspondents have kindly written to the editor of this magazine, asking why some public protest is not made against a series of insults that have continued, with but slight and spasmodic interruptions, since the year 1880, when his name was first appended to the title-page of *THE THEATRE*. To such and all he replies that he only crosses swords with worthy antagonists. The editor of the dramatic print in question has a perfect right to criticise the published work of any public man. He may think and say, if he chooses to do so, that the work of an old friend—to whom he stands indebted for journalistic assistance faithfully, punctually and loyally performed in days gone by when he needed help—be it in the form of poetry or prose, play or essay, story or criticism, is the most abject rubbish that ever disgraced journalism, literature, or the drama; he may print or publish his so-called criticisms week after week; he may publicly and privately apologise again and again for a series of gratuitous insults, and the next day withdraw the "honour" he gave and the promise he offered to let bygones be bygones; but he only earns from me the contemptuous shrug that such devices deserve. The readers of this magazine know pretty well by this time how powerless are such miserable little pin-pricks against one who is absolutely indifferent to the tactics of his pertinacious aggressor.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the Provinces, and Paris, from February 25, 1887, to March 23, 1887:—

(Revivals are marked thus.)*

LONDON:

- Feb. 26 "A Merry Meeting," farce, by W. Lestocq. Opera Comique Theatre.
- „ 28 "Next of Kin," melodrama, in five acts, by Robert Overton. Sanger's Theatre.
- March 2 "Her Trustee," play, in four acts, by James J. Blood. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée—single performance).
- „ 3* "Lady Clancarty," drama, by Tom Taylor. St. James's Theatre.
- „ 8 "A Woman Killed with Kindness," tragedy, by Thomas Heywood. Olympic Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)
- „ 10 "The Mormon," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Mr. Calthorpe. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)
- „ 10 "The Brothers," play, in one act, by Henry Byatt. Vaudeville Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)
- „ 14* "The Snowball," comedy, in three acts, by Sydney Grundy. Globe Theatre.
- „ 14 "After Many Days," comedietta, in one act, by A. Elwood. Globe Theatre.
- „ 19 "Ruddy George; or, Robin Redbreast," parody, in two acts, by H. G. F. Taylor, music by Percy Reeve. Toole's Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)
- „ 21* "In Chancery," comedy, in three acts, by A. W. Pinero. Olympic Theatre.
- „ 21* "My Cousin," farce, by J. J. Henson. Olympic Theatre.

PROVINCES:

- Feb. 24 "Zilpha," drama, by Walter A. Jackson. Theatre of Varieties, Brentford.
- „ 28 "Shadows of a Great City," drama, in five acts, by L. R. Sherwell. Royal Princess's, Glasgow.
- March 7 "Hans the Boatman," comedy-drama, by Clay M. Greene. Theatre Royal, Sheffield.
- „ 14 "A Fool's Fidelity," drama, by George Capel. Theatre Royal Birmingham.
- „ 19 "The Barrister," comedy, by G. Manville Fenn and J. H. Darnley. Grand Theatre, Leeds.
- „ 22 "Hook and Eye," comedietta, by Gille Norwood. Grand Theatre, Leeds.

PARIS:

- Feb. 19 "Monsieur de Pictordu," comedy, in four acts, by M. A. Le Roy. Beaumarchais.
- „ 27 "Fiacre No. 13," drama, in five acts and twelve tableaux, adapted by M. Jules Dornay, from Xavier de Montepin's novel. Château d'Eau.

- March 1* "Gotte," comedy, in four acts, by M. Henri Meilhac. Palais Royal.
- " 6* "Tailleur pour Dames," vaudeville, in three acts, by M. Georges Feydeau. Renaissance.
- " 7 "La Foire de Séville." Pantomime. Nouveau-Cirque.
- " 7 "Roman Comique," a ballet. Eden.
- " 13 Byron's "Manfred," a new adaptation in verse, by M. Emile Moreau, with Schumann's music. Châtelet.
- " 15 "Monsieur de Morat," a comedy, in four acts, by M. Edmond Tarbé. Vaudeville.
- " 16* "Aïda," opera, by Verdi. Opéra House.
- " 16 "Proserpine," lyric drama, in four acts; words by MM. Auguste Vacquerie and Louis Gallet; music by M. Camille Saint-Saëns. Opéra-Comique.
- " 16 "Un Soldat," a drama, in one act, by an anonymous author. Concert-Parisien.
- " 18 "Durand et Durand," a comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Maurice Ordonneau and Albin Valabrégue. Palais-Royal.
- " 19 "Noce à Nini," a vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Emile de Najac and Albert Millaud. Variétés.
- " 21 "Les Dossiers Jaunes," a comedy, in three acts, by M. Eugène Morand. Renaissance.





" Every gift of noble origin
Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath."

WORDSWORTH.

MISS SOPHIE EYRE.

THE THEATRE.



Art Behind the Curtain.

A PORTRAIT-PAINTER'S EARLY EXPERIENCES.

BY WALTER GOODMAN,

Author of the "Pearl of the Antilles; or an Artist in Cuba," &c.

I.

SOMETHING WANTING.

PEOPLE who sit for their likenesses seldom, if ever, consider how much the artist's success is dependent upon his sitter.

Few persons, however, feel at home and at ease while posing for a portrait. It is like acting a part which has not been properly rehearsed, or making a maiden speech which was not previously prepared. The effort to appear at one's best, the restraint necessarily placed over the actions, combined by the close and critical scrutiny of a perfect stranger, as the artist often is, causes the sitter sometimes to feel as if his lineaments and his limbs didn't belong to him.

There are moreover restless and impatient sitters—from babies in arms to business men of active habits—who cannot keep the same attitude for any given period; stiff and awkward sitters, who will not preserve a graceful and natural pose; expressionless sitters, upon whose blank countenance is a perpetual stare or a meaningless smile. And there is the nervous, or shy sitter—usually represented by an artless maiden of sweet seventeen—whom no devices peculiar to the studio, or persuasions of friends, will induce to look the artist in the face and assume an easy and a becoming attitude. When told to turn this way she invariably turns that; when requested to raise her beautiful eyes she droops them more than ever, or, like the "maiden fair," gives a side glance and looks down; and when a "pleasing" expression is wanted, there appears upon her downcast features a look of unutterable gloom.

Of all sitters most trying to the artist and difficult to deal with,

perhaps none can compare with the one just described, and it was precisely to this category that belonged a young and prepossessing lady of seventeen summers, who, at the period to which this experience refers, sat for a photographic head and bust which was afterwards enlarged to life-size dimensions and "worked up" in oils without a single sitting from nature.

It was because the young girl could not be persuaded to pass through the trying ordeal that the sittings in question were dispensed with, as happens in the case of a posthumous portrait, and under these circumstances it is scarcely surprising that the life-size head and bust failed to meet with the approval of the patron when he and his friends were invited to inspect it.

There was "a something wanting" they all agreed. There was a something wanting about the nose, they couldn't exactly say what; there was a something wanting about the mouth, they couldn't exactly say where; there was a something wanting about one of the eyes, they couldn't exactly say which. And that "something" appeared to be so conspicuous by its absence as to cause one very severe critic to declare, in reference to the general resemblance, that he shouldn't have known it.

Mr. Robbin, who was the sole and responsible manager of the establishment where the picture was ordered, was far too conversant with the caprices of critics to attach much importance to their vague and indefinite remarks. No one better than he was aware how often a compliment is paid to a lady at the expense of a limner, and as the sitter was young and beautiful it was quite possible that the adverse observations of the work of art were mere empty tributes to the work of nature. As a man of the world, therefore, he regarded what had been said with the indifference it deserved, while, as an artist, he waited for more pronounced opinions.

For the better comprehension of the reader, I should here mention that Mr. Annibal Robbin was only half an artist and the other half a photographer, and that his establishment was situated in an important provincial town. In appearance, however, he was every inch an artist and nothing whatever of a photographer; his artistic make-up being chiefly assisted by a flowing beard of nature's growing, a velveteen coat, a red neck-tie and patent leather boots. It was for this reason that Mr. Robbin styled himself "Artist and Photographer," as also because the title dis-

tinguished him from common-place rivals in the profession called "Photographic Artists," "Artistic-Photographers" and Photographers pure and simple, who displayed samples of their handiwork in shop windows and doorways, or upon the walls of local railway stations. The same fine distinctions observable in the case of the "Perruquier" as opposed to the Hair-dresser, the "Clothier and Outfitter" as contrasted with the Tailor, or the "Purveyor of Meat" in relation to the Butcher, applied, in Mr. Robbin's estimation, to the Photographer, and, impressed by this belief, he adopted Artist as a distinct prefix to the other title and made no public show of his productions.

No specimens of any kind were to be seen outside Mr. Robbin's premises; not so much as a humble show-case was anywhere perceptible to the public eye. The artist side of him was superior to such contrivances for courting custom, while his photographic side considered itself independent of advertisement. Those who desired to inspect Mr. Robbin's works of art were invited by a painted hand to ascend a lofty staircase and follow the direction of its pointing forefinger; a device that was repeated at every landing, and when the hand ceased to point the visitor found himself as far from the Studio as ever, as there was still the Reception-room and Show-room, besides an apartment devoted to purposes of the toilette; then came another flight or two of narrower stairs and after this a long, winding passage, at the end of which were three break-neck steps, which in turn led to the glass-house and the roof.

Though well-known to the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants, that Mr. Robbin was not without assistants, no person doubted that the countless specimens upon the walls of his show-room, upon sloping screens and tables, upon chairs, tables and easles, were the unaided handiwork of the versatile gentleman whose name in full was emblazoned in bold letters of vermillion in a conspicuous corner of each production. There were portraits in oils of more or less distinction, with "Annibal Robbin" inscribed upon the canvas; likenesses in coloured crayons of nobody in particular, similarly impressed with his imposing autograph. There were porcelain or "opal" pictures, water-colour miniatures and autotypes of famous actresses and fashionable beauties; drawings in Indian-ink and sepia; in black chalks and French pastels; all bearing the same illustrious signature—a signature

that was more or less large to suit the proportions of the work it endorsed.

Whether or not Mr. Robbin took any other part in the manufacture of these productions besides that which had reference to the original photograph and its enlargement, to the written particulars of the sitter's colouring, to the lock of hair which usually accompanied it, and to the frame and glass, was of no consequence to the outside community; but there could be no question that the studio was Mr. Robbin's studio, the responsibilities his responsibilities, the connection his connection; so for these and similar reasons he might have been fully justified in taking to himself all the credit as the artist and all the profits as the photographer.

Moreover, Mr. Robbin possessed that rare gift of speech so invaluable for most business transactions, and which to a person in his position was of peculiar service. His success as an artist and his prosperity as a photographer were, indeed, mainly due to his professional patter and power of persuasion—two inestimable qualities which had often been instrumental in securing custom, and in convincing a customer, if not that black was white, that a bad likeness was a good one.

Those only who were behind the studio scenes—practically and otherwise—knew that the end and aim in art of Anniball Robbin was to “pass” a picture. So long as the patron was satisfied and paid for it, the work of art might have been the vilest daub that emanated from an *atelier*. His system was, on the whole, not dissimilar to that of an exponent of conjuring tricks. For instance, a card, with a picture on it, is in the first place “forced” upon the unwary spectator, who is told to look at it well, so that the device may be duly impressed upon his memory and recognised after. The card is then put quickly back in the pack—or picture-frame, as the case may be—the pack is falsely shuffled while the conjurer talks, when—Presto, fly!—the magic pass is effected, and the picture is again visible—say on the walls of the spectator's private dwelling.

The same system was practised on behalf of the life-sized head and bust of the bashful beauty. Something was wanting for its completion to the satisfaction of the young lady's friends, though that something had as yet not been very clearly defined. Nor was Mr. Robbin much better enlightened when one of the com-

pany said, "It is much too old;" and another that it was "not half good-looking enough," that the expression was not "pleasing;" and that, taken as a whole, it "doesn't do her justice." It was not the first time in Mr. Robbin's extended experience that such remarks had been expressed in his hearing; but he knew perfectly well how to meet them, and with the conviction that the "something wanting" referred not so much to the faulty features as to the absent frame, he went at once for the gilded embellishment, and, as he did so, observed in a hopeful manner,—

"Wait till you see it in the frame!"

While engaged in the important process of framing, Mr. Robbin talked about the frame and of the extraordinary difference that would be perceived when the portrait was viewed under the more favourable circumstances.

"A frame," he remarked, in the rapid, continuous manner peculiar to him, "gives a finish—a completeness—to a picture, and no work of art should be without one. The glass, too, is another important feature. Glass softens and subdues the colouring, which might otherwise appear too vivid when freshly painted, and wanting in tone. You'll be astonished at the difference when you see it under glass. By-the-by, sir," he continued, addressing the customer who had ordered the picture and was to pay for it, frame and all, "I have taken the liberty of employing patent plate in preference to ordinary French crown. Common picture-glass is always more or less wavy, and never entirely free from bubbles. But no extra charge will be made for the more expensive material."

In this strain Mr. Robbin went on till the last brad was hammered into the frame's rabbet, and the last rub given to the polished surface of the patent plate. Then, after placing the easel in a position where the picture was beheld edgeways, as with a side-scene viewed from the wings of a stage, he observed in a tone, half of inquiry, half of triumph,—

"Now!"—and before the customer or any other person could offer a remark, favourable or otherwise, he demanded how the company liked the picture *as a picture*?

The customer, who was apparently short-sighted and slow of speech, said that the picture was certainly improved by its gilded and glazed adornments; that the background and dress couldn't be better, and that for this last reason, if for no other, he would have known it anywhere.

"Thank you very much," said the artist side of Mr. Robbin, in grateful acknowledgment of the high compliment, while the photographic side took occasion to recommend gold twisted wire as more suitable for hanging purposes than ordinary picture-cord. "I, myself, will personally superintend the hanging," he continued, with a desire to increase the debt of obligation incurred by the generous gift of the patent plate, "as everything depends upon the favourable light in which a picture is placed. And when it is hung up in your own private parlour, sir, why you won't know it again!"

Considering the customer had only just stated that he would have known it anywhere, Mr. Robbin's last remark sounded somewhat out of place; but, as no positive opinion had as yet been expressed of the likeness *as a likeness*, whatever might have been said of the picture *as a picture*, he intended most probably to convey that a striking resemblance would, after the hanging with gold twisted wire, gradually reveal itself.

While Mr. Robbin was secretly congratulating himself upon the success of his undertaking—*oratorical as well as pictorial*—the customer remarked, in a somewhat regretful tone—

"I am a poor judge of pictures, Mr. Robbin—this lady, here, understands more about such things than I do—so, if there is no objection, we will ask her to give us the benefit of her unbiassed opinion."

If there was one thing more than another that Mr. Robbin dreaded and discountenanced at his establishment, it was a lady with a smattering of art and an unbiassed opinion; so, in anticipation of any adverse criticism which might escape the enlightened lady, he said, in a confident and confidential sort of way—as though there existed among connoisseurs an artistic freemasonry—

"It will want the finishing touches, of course. But a few touches here and a few touches there will make *all* the difference." Here he turned to the authority, who replied, with a faint sneer and a finishing touch of irony in her tone—

"Something besides finishing touches are wanted, I fancy?"

"Quite so," said Mr. Robbin joyfully, as if the lady had exactly expressed his own sentiments. "Perhaps, madam," he added, in his politest manner, "you will kindly point out one or two trifling errors with a view to their immediate amendment."

The lady reflected for a few moments, as if in the uncertainty where, or how, to begin. Then in unbiassed, not to say blunt, terms, she said—

“In the first place, the eyes are much too blue.”

“Eyes—too blue,” repeated Mr. Robbin, in an absent sort of way that may have reminded his hearers of a stage “aside.”

“Miss Newstead’s eyes are more of a hazel grey,” she continued. “Then the complexion is far too ruddy. Her skin is more refined and delicate, with just a tinge of diffused pink about the dimples.”

“Cheeks—too red,” said Mr. Robbin, in the same mechanical manner as before, as if still talking off at a theatrical wing.

“There is also a want of animation in the features, which gives a certain severe or strong-minded look,” she went on.

“Yes,” interposed the customer with parental warmth, “Sybil’s countenance, though thoughtful and intelligent, is at all times full of amiable sweetness and sunny brightness.”

“Face—more smiling,” was the echo, in an abbreviated form, of all this.

“The hair, again,” resumed the lady, after a painful pause, “should be several shades lighter.”

“The hair,” promptly put in the photographic side of Mr. Robbin, “was done to pattern. But perhaps you would like a little more gold?”

What was meant by this no person unacquainted with the secrets could possibly tell, unless “pattern” referred to the moulding of the frame, and “gold” to its gilded and corded accompaniments. The lady, who “understood more about such things,” however, seemed to grasp the meaning at once, as she presently said that a few bright touches to the hair would certainly improve it.

These and similar touches Mr. Robbin proposed there and then to apply; but before doing so he remarked, in language which reminded the company of a public lecture with illustrated diagrams,—

“In such exceptional cases, ladies and gentlemen, there is, as you know, nothing like a fresh eye. A fresh eye will discover in a moment what an eye accustomed to have the work of art constantly under his gaze may overlook or fail to perceive. So with your permission I will ask one of my assistants to step this way;”

and with this Mr. Robbin betook himself to an end of the spacious apartment, which was divided from the rest by a frail partition of wood and canvas, and conferred *sotto voce* with someone on the other side.

I should mention that this screened enclosure formed a convenient, well-lighted studio, and that it was occupied at all hours of the day by a respectable looking young man of two-and-twenty years, who acted as sole and responsible artist to the establishment, unless exception be taken to an elderly spinster in charge of the reception-room, who was specially retained to tint and touch up small photographs, keep accounts, and cook chops, and "spot out" and peel potatoes, mount prints, and otherwise make herself generally useful. In appearance, the artist was not at all like the artist of tradition or the conventional artist of the stage, being at all times neatly attired in the ordinary dress of the day, with hair worn short and carefully parted in the middle, and with a face close-shaved, except for a single moustache of auburn hue. This respectable-looking person was alone responsible for the glaring defects observable in the life-size head and bust; his fingers, and no others, had from first to last painted it, and in his possession, too, was the small photograph which, in conjunction with the lock of hair and the written particulars of the lady's colouring, had served as a guide for the larger production. The particulars in question were simply these :

"Fair, good colour, blue eyes; hair and dress to pattern"—a description, be it said, which might equally apply to a fat dowager with a double chin and a cast in her eye.

The secret conference over, the young man emerged from his improvised studio, where, till then, he had been an unwilling listener to all that had been spoken in his dispraise on the other side, and, advancing to the centre of the apartment, bowed politely to the company, like an actor who makes his *début* before a strange audience. As he did so, he perceived that the gentleman, whom he had hitherto listened to from his frail retreat, but never before beheld, was elderly and corpulent, with a bald head, a round, good-natured face, fringed by grey whiskers, and a large diamond ring, apparently of great value, which he wore upon a forefinger. He also observed that the hypercritical lady, with the faint sneer and touch of irony in her voice, had no visible appear-

ance either of a married woman, or a widow, and that she was tall, dark and graceful, not more than seven-and-twenty, and strikingly handsome.

"A fresh eye is wanted here," Mr. Robbin remarked to his assistant, without addressing him by name, or offering to introduce him to the company; "can you suggest anything?"

The fresh eye glanced for a moment at his fresh handiwork, and from his handiwork to the dark beauty, as if in doubt whether the latter and the likeness were not related; but, finding no resemblance whatsoever, he answered simply and without hesitation—

"Sittings!"

A smile of satisfaction illumined the lady's handsome features, as if she approved of the reply, while her dark, penetrating eyes scanned the young man curiously from top to toe, as though to assure herself that the respectable object before her was human and not a ghost. Meanwhile, the bald-headed gentleman exclaimed with some warmth—

"Impossible! My daughter would never consent. We could scarcely persuade her to sit for an instantaneous photograph, so I'm quite sure we should never get her to sit for a longer period."

"Perhaps, if the sittings were to take place at her own house," suggested the dark one, with the sneer this time in her features and not in her tone; "it might make *all* the difference."

Now, if there was one thing more than another that Anniball Robbin set his face against, it was sittings at a customer's private dwelling, partly because he himself was unable to attend, partly because he disapproved of undue intimacy between an assistant and a patron—an intimacy which domestic sittings frequently gave rise to. Familiarity which, under ordinary circumstances, might only breed contempt, in an artist and photographer's case often led to certain clandestine relationships affecting the artist's rights and the photographer's profits, as happened once when an unscrupulous assistant so far diverged from the path of duty as to undertake an order on his own account without consulting his employer, and, what was worse, executed it and received full payment without troubling the photographer to take any part in the transaction even as regards the taking of a negative.

These and similar considerations caused Mr. Robbin to hesitate before adopting the dark lady's suggestion, and as the customer

had also expressed his disapproval of the proposed sittings, he answered presently—

“After your valuable hints, madam, I think we need not trouble Miss Newstead to sit anywhere; and if the company have no objection,” he added, in something of the language of a trade advertisement, “the alterations can be made while you wait.”

As time was no object with the company, they waited; and, meanwhile, Mr. Robbin requested his assistant to go for a palette and some brushes. When the young man returned, and the picture had been carefully removed from its frame and glass, his employer remarked—

“Now I will just ask my assistant, with his fresh eye, to put a touch or two to the nose, a touch or two to the mouth, a touch or two to the eyes, to the complexion, and to the hair, and you will be astonished at the difference.”

Here the speaker waved his hand in mesmeric fashion at his assistant, and the assistant, comprehending the gesture, at once proceeded to apply, in a very matter-of-fact way, a few touches to the picture, not only with his fresh eye, but also with his fresh paint, assisted by his magic brush—an implement which, in Mr. Robbin’s estimation, was obtainable at any respectable oil and colour shop, in conjunction with “Robertson’s Medium,” spirits of turpentine and similar art materials.

After a few vagrant and undecided dabs, the demonstrator, with another mesmeric pass, suddenly checked his assistant, and as suddenly seized his customer by the arm, and after dragging him with difficulty to a distant corner of the chamber, triumphantly exclaimed—

“Now, sir! if you will stand exactly in this spot,”—indicating a particular pattern of the carpet—“and half close your eyes”—half closing his own by way of example—“I think you will say that another touch will spoil it.”

The old gentleman, who was short-winded as well as short-sighted, and slow of speech, stationed himself in the exact locality pointed out by the photographer, and otherwise did as directed; though he was unable to say that another touch would spoil the picture, first because he had not yet recovered his breath, and second because he had already arrived at the conclusion that the last touches had completely obliterated every trace of likeness that might have previously existed. In addition to this, the

critical lady, whom he seemed to regard as an oracle in art and in everything else, expressed her own conviction that the magic touches had been so far magical in their effects as to transform the portrait into quite another person.

"It is more like me than my sister," she remarked with characteristic, not to say irritating, candour; but Mr. Robbin was not yet vanquished by her unbiassed observations.

"Ah!" said he with a delighted smile, "if it's like you, madam, then it *must* be something like your sister, on account of family resemblance;" and with a view to discover which position resembled the dark sister, he placed his hands over the picture so as to expose first the upper part of the face, then the lower, and finding no person could perceive the slightest similarity, he again shifted his hands in a manner that concealed the entire countenance, leaving nothing visible except the background, the dress, and the roots of the hair.

And this was the very last straw which Mr. Robbin clung to, as the lady whom he persisted in calling "madam," without knowing whether she was married or single, now completely crushed him by mentioning that Miss Newstead was only an adopted sister, and not a bit like herself. Mr. Robbin had, however, still the proposed sittings to fall back upon; so, after a parting glance at the production and another glance at the dark beauty, as if speculating upon the possibility of converting the likeness of the adopted sister into an adapted one of the critical lady, he decided, without further delay, to adopt his assistant's original suggestion.

Sittings from nature were accordingly agreed to by all parties present; not excepting the customer, whose scruples with regard to his offspring's nervous temperament were eventually overcome; and, with the understanding that an experiment would shortly be attempted at the parental dwelling of Miss Newstead, the company withdrew.

An appointment was then registered in the book kept for that purpose by the photographic maid-of-all-work, and the person entrusted with this difficult, not to say dangerous, duty was the assistant-artist. How that gentleman acquitted himself shall be told in another experience; meanwhile, I may mention that the fresh eye, and its companion eye, practically rather than pictorially, belonged to me.

Beecher's Histrionic Power.

THE Stage and the Pulpit go hand in hand in the great cause of elevating humanity, and when a preacher combines the dramatic instinct with strong religious convictions, he exercises a magical power in drawing people to his standard, no matter what creed or denomination he may follow.

The late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was one of the most striking examples of this. He was full of dramatic power. It kindled the sleeping fire of his eyes, it thrilled in every tone of his voice, it glowed, like the lightning play on some massive peak, in the rugged lines of his face, filling them with a grand beauty that added power to his words, and swept his hearers on with him in the storm of his irresistible eloquence.

His *personnel* was quite plain, but the massive dignity of his head redeemed his ordinary appearance. In the pulpit or on the platform his voice was peculiarly resonant and sympathetic, he spoke slowly, every word seemed weighted with the magnetic glow of his eyes; his gestures were few and forcible. But the acme of his power centred in the varying expression of his wonderful face.

It is easier to make a great actor of a preacher than to make a great preacher of an actor. The actor has a thousand aids to the developing and perfecting of his creations; he heightens his natural gifts by taste and ingenuity in costuming, the mysterious and magical resources of the "make-up" box, the charm of the *mise-en-scène*—in fact all that appeals to the sensuous enjoyment of beauty is at his command. On the other hand, the preacher must seek his aids from a higher and more subtle source; he can reach his auditors only through the intellect; his language must paint the changing beauty of scene, and his voice supply the inspiring aid of music. He must throw the glamour of an idealised personality over his listeners and lead them into the Elysium fields of imagination; then let the histrionic power come into play, and behold! you have the great preacher, such as Mr. Beecher was.

Word-painting was one of his strong points, his pictures of the great events in the Biblical history of the Jews were superb!

I shall never forget his vivid impassioned description of the

destruction of Jerusalem. In stirring tones he painted the sufferings of the persecuted Jews ; the invasion of their beloved city ; you saw the ruthless sweep of the soldiery as they poured through its sacred gates ; you shuddered at the maddened, helpless rage of the Jews ; your ears rang with their prayers, their cries, their lamentations. You beheld the day turned into blinding night beneath the fire and smoke of the burning temple ; and you stood amid the profound desolation of the ruined city, as you listened while he told in low, reverent tones, with inspired face, the lesson to be learned from this awful punishment—the folly of pride—the merciful destruction of all earthly things that overtook the wandering sinner and brought him back to the feet of his God.

His pictures of the life of the Saviour were so exquisite in detail, so chastely beautiful in diction, so noble in imagination, that the sacred fire of eloquence seemed to have touched his lips, and burned deep into his heart and brain.

In all this he displayed his great resources of tragic and emotional power, but he was equally strong when he ran the gamut of comedy. The Parables were his favourite field for good-humoured satire. He told the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican with delicious drollery ; he would assume the pompous mien, the sanctified face, the slanting, scornful glance at the poor Publican, as the Pharisee called upon the Lord to mark the difference between himself and that wretched sinner of a Publican near the door, whose sins had made him too poor to pay for a seat among the elders and the deacons ; and before the laugh, which this droll application aroused, had ceased, he hurried on to paint in vigorous language the false, uncharitable pride of the Pharisee, and the manly humility of the Publican. I have heard him say there was nothing like putting people in a good humour first, when you wished to impress some unpleasant truth on them. You caught them on the rebound.

He had mastered the art of playing on the harp of human emotion, every string vibrated to his touch ; he had the charm of bringing his subject within the scope of the most limited understanding.

I don't think he was ever heard at his best outside of Plymouth Church. It was his vantage-ground ; he had built it up from a little low-roofed meeting-house, with a score of benches, to an immense church to which thousands flocked, Sunday after Sunday,

to listen to his wonderful eloquence. And what a noble pride he took in it! He was untiring in his exhortations to the young to work, struggle, and persevere as he had done. Aye, to be thankful for the struggles which, like the action of fire on the gold, brought out the true metal of their worth.

I remember hearing him relate some of his own experiences. "When I first began preaching," he said, "I had but two rooms. I felt more grateful, I think, than I do now for all the comforts of my house. I went away from Cincinnati to preach in Lawrenceburg, a wretched little village. I had no patrimony; all I had was my salary, and that amounted to four hundred dollars. I went on that to marry my wife, which cost me two hundred dollars, and I had exactly eighteen cents when I came back!

"I remember I never slept in a spare bed of a friend of mine then, but I felt deeply grateful for it. It was then I had two rooms: one was parlour, study and bedroom; the other, kitchen, cellar and sitting-room. The cellar was made by putting things under the bed! When Judge Bernard gave me his cast-off clothing to wear, I was grateful for it; although, he being a slim man, while I was rather developed, it was a tight fit. And still I could have said, I am the son of Lyman Beecher, President of a Theological College, here in a little sneaking village with no church; no elder! and no one to make an elder out of! But I remember, I had a deep sense of gratitude for being permitted to preach the Gospel."

This was told with an inimitable drollery of voice and expression which was irresistibly funny, and convulsed his hearers with laughter, but through it all rang a note of pathos that carried the lesson it taught to the heart of every listener!

In Mr. Beecher the Stage suffered as great a loss as the Pulpit enjoyed a gain. He would have made a revolution in stage history, in the creation of a new and powerful school. What it would have been is impossible to surmise, so highly endowed was he with histrionic gifts. But it is now too late to enter on these speculations; all that is gone. The glowing eye is dimmed, the eloquent lips are dumb, the glory of expression has faded into the mask of death; and the hearts of men will never again leap and thrill beneath the master touch of the great Actor-Preacher!

ANNA DE BRÉMONT.

The First Nights of My Young Days.

BY GODFREY TURNER.

[FIFTH PAPER.]

JULIUS CÆSAR was played, with the cast I have indicated, in Phelps's third season, 1846-47. The next play of note was "Measure for Measure," which was, at least, as well acted as the generation now waning can hope to see done again. No heartier Duke Vicentio than Phelps ever walked, and spoke, and played the friar. His voice rang out with an earnestness rare even with the best declaimers; and he closed the third act with a splendid delivery of the rhymed verses, beginning, "He who the sword of heaven will bear." Of course, the prison speech, "Be absolute for death," was magnificently given; but it was in the last scene that he struck home, and had the audience at his will, to mould and sway as pleased him. The lifted voice is still in my ears when I recal the lines—

An Angelo for Claudio, death for death.
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and Measure still for Measure.

Through the old rafters of the house rang the stout, emphatic syllables, finding an echo unmistakable in the genuine spontaneous sympathy of men and women. The later touch of humour in the implied pardon, "By this, Lord Angelo perceives he's safe," delivered with a significant side-look of princely amenity, likewise had its response; for the truth will never be trite that "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin." The parish of Clerkenwell, as Mrs. Broughton might have put it, had a liberal education throughout the long tenure of Sadlers' Wells by Mr. Phelps. Angelo was played, with the heaviness which imperfectly replaces weight, by George Bennett, who succeeded in making hypocrisy ponderous, and villainy dull. Bennett, in truth, could be tedious on occasions, his measured slowness greatly assisting

the serious effort. Lucio, the rake, or "fantastic," as he is designated in the list of persons represented, was played with absolutely perfect fitness by Hoskins. This gentleman was in the habit of playing Othello for his benefit, and whenever he could "get the chance"; but I am happy to say I escaped most of his tragic humour. He was a singularly good comedian, quite inimitable in his way, with personal peculiarities wholly out of place in tragedy at the time I now speak of; though, in proportion as his elastic, mercurial style abandoned him, he may have developed a colonial faculty for sterner stuff. The first time I saw him was in one of those old-fashioned farces chiefly turning on a supposed feminine capacity in private life for all kinds of disguises. Mrs. Brougham, now in trousers of military cut, and anon in buckskins and top boots, mystified her husband, a gentleman named Flighty, I believe, for the purpose of teaching him some high moral lesson—the duty of being jealous at proper times and seasons, if I remember the argument with any approach to accuracy. While making acquaintance with Hoskins, in the part just mentioned, I also enjoyed, for the first time, the vivacity of a young actress, afterwards to delight me in many and diverse characters, both at Sadler's Wells and the Lyceum—Miss Julia St. George.

Hoskins had a way of taking the audience, with whom he was a great favourite, by his entrances, which were always rapid and pleasantly surprising. He was tall, and had a slight stoop; his eyebrows were marked as in the faces so often seen in George Cruikshanks' etchings, and he had a trick of bending them together in a puzzled kind of frown. There was an agreeable neatness in his make-up, this being always artistically free from the coarse and palpable excess which, at the present time, is facially detrimental to many a stage picture. This, then, was the Sadler's Wells' Lucio, a flagrantly licentious personage in the play, redeemed somewhat by good nature and a charitable tolerance of vice in other men. Lucio, dramatically speaking, may be said to have been born too soon; his right place being in the Comedy of the Restoration. Younge, as Elbow, a "simple constable," with a strong family likeness to Dogberry, led the audacious hilarity of the scenes in which Mrs. Marston as Mistress Overdone, Scharf as the Clown Pompey, and Williams as Master Froth kept the house in a roar over matters more humorous than



"I slept and dreamed that Life was Beauty,
I woke and found that Life was Duty."

HOOPER.

MR. GILBERT FARQUHAR.

delicate. Williams, in the bills of Sadler's Wells, is a name concerning which I have not much, if any, doubt ; but lest writing from unassisted memory, and with total abstinence from the refreshment of old newspapers—I may haply err in this—let me just observe that where I have written “Williams” I have referred to a painstaking performer, with the face of a vulgar Voltaire, and with a most un-Voltaire-like dulness, who kept a small tobacco shop near the theatre, and was in requisition for all manner of little parts. This Mr. Williams, or whatever his name was (if, indeed, it was not that), now and then revelled in the badly-broken English of a conventional stage-Frenchman, such as occasionally comes to the front in some old-fashioned farce, played as an afterpiece ; for there were no curtain-lifting bagatelles in those days, when the play began at seven and was well over by ten, sometimes much earlier. I can call him to mind in “The Merry Wives of Windsor,” as a Dr. Cains of unexampled and quite phenomenal badness. But, as the simpleton Froth, in “Measure for Measure,” he made a sufficient foil for the voluble impertinences of Scharf's Pompey.

There was no place for Henry Marston in this play, and the part of Claudio was filled, I think, by Mr. Frederick Robinson, one of my schoolfellows, and a promising young actor, of whom I lost sight before he had manifested much fruition. He had no salient qualities, but was merely a handsome, graceful, intelligent performer, of the passable kind one easily forgets. I have tried, by thinking of Claudio's speeches, especially that one which begins “Ay, but to die, and go we know not where,” to revive the image of young Mr. Robinson in my memory, so as to identify him with Isabella's brother, but it is of no use. As for Isabella, she was represented with dignified purity by the fair and stately Miss Laura Addison. To her some of the many familiar lines in this little-acted play fell very fitly. For example :

Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one-half so good a grace
As mercy does.

In this, and in a passage that follows so quickly upon it as almost to form one consecutive speech, re-commencing with the words, “Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once,” Portia's angelic plea for mercy, in the trial scene of “The Merchant of

Venice," is recalled, even by verbal resemblance. It was by no means surprising, therefore, that many among Miss Addison's hearers recognised her Portia in her Isabella, and by their warm applause honoured both in one. On the whole, this play was well adapted to the capabilities of the Sadler's Wells company, which, though it had few stars of first, or even second, magnitude, had caught some "radiance and collateral light" from the genial sun of its system. The times were not propitious to any great and enlightening enterprise in art of whatsoever kind; and if Phelps had depended on patronage and subscription for support, or had "pitched his show" at the west-end of London, there would soon have been an end of his managerial efforts. But, luckily, they were unfashionable; good sense and necessity combined had led him in the first place to make choice, for cheapness, of an unfashionable quarter of the town, and the only frequenters of his theatre who were not altogether of the unfashionable kind were the celebrated men of letters, science, and art of that day, who were mostly on the free list. There was something very solid, something in the best sense English, in the honest enthusiasm of Phelps. His portrait was not to be seen in the Bond Street librarians' windows, among Count d'Orsay's superfine, niggling pencil profiles of Sir Edward Lytton-Bulwer, the Hon. Thomas Duncombe, Lord George Bentinck, Prince Louis Napoleon, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, and Dwarkanauth Tagore, all of whom looked smooth and glossy, as with Macassar oil. I have some recollection, it is true, of a lithograph by Bagniet, portraying Phelps in his habit as he lived, one of those admirable drawings in which the skilful French artist—whom I met in Paris only a very few years ago, and who is still, I hope, alive and in the best health and spirits—was only excelled by our countryman, Lane. But I don't think the Count ever had Mr. Phelps for a sitter, though I should be rather pleased than otherwise to learn that I am mistaken.

It was in the second month of that undistinguished year, 1847, a blank epoch in British annals, between the Abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 and the Chartist meeting on Kennington Common in 1848, that a new play was devised for Sadler's Wells, the author being a clergyman who had previously achieved some qualified sort of success in this way at Drury Lane. "The King of the Commons," Mr. White's former work, was

written for Macready. "Feudal Times" was the title of the historical play furnished for Phelps. Rehabilitations of unpopular characters in history had not then grown quite so common as they have become in later years; and there was a certain piquant originality in the investiture of Walter Cochrane Earl of Mar, the favourite of King James III. of Scotland, with the noblest knightly qualities, as well as with various distinct attributes of genius and the arts of peace. This Admirable Crichton of an earlier age was represented by Phelps as a paragon of fidelity, prowess, ingenuity, valour, learning, culture, and magnanimity. The fifteenth century original of this "very perfect" knight is only known to readers of Scottish chronicles as a mason—or, as he might perhaps have been called in these days, an architect—who made himself a courtier, crept into the confidence of the King, was created Earl of Mar, and was hanged by the insurgent nobles at Lauder Bridge. The reverend author of "Feudal Times" took another view of Walter Cochrane; made him the builder of castles neither in Spain nor in the air; made him a painter, made him a poet, made him a lover. The beauteous Margaret Randolph, a kindred soul, endued by Miss Laura Addison with a stage-heroine's loftiest sentiments, returns the affection of Lord Mar; and their conversation flows in one continued stream of passionate, tender, imaginative eloquence. The idealised Walter Cochrane is just as repugnant to the Scottish nobles as the Walter Cochrane of unimproved history is recorded to have been. Earl Douglas, played with energetic sturdiness and historical verisimilitude by George Bennett, deigns to challenge the low-born lord to single combat; and the description of the fight by Margaret Randolph, as she is supposed to overlook the lists from a turret window, is an effective incident of the play, reminding older playgoers of a similar situation in more than one dramatised version of "Ivanhoe." King James (Mr. Henry Marston) and his Queen (Miss Cooper), seated below, are listening with agonised impatience, while the lady, who has climbed to a loop-holed window of the castle chamber, keeps them informed of the combat as it proceeds. Her knight is mounted on a grey steed; Lord Angus bestrides a grand destrier "coal-black save, 'twixt his eyes, a star of white." The action is so well told that the house is breathless, and they who sit in back benches gaze through the gaps in front of them, as if, by failing

to do this, they would lose a sight wholly imaginary. Of a sudden comes from Margaret the cry :—

A shock !

A horse flies loose !

KING. Which horse ?

MARGARET. It is the black.

Then follows, from the same elevated post, the description of a renewed encounter, foot to foot, with swords, in the course of which Margaret exclaims : “ O, would to God I were a knight ! ” soon afterwards, breaking forth into another cry,—

He’s down, he’s down !

KING. Who’s down ?

MARG. Lord Angus ! O’er him, like a king, stands Mar. All this, of course, is in the highest degree satisfactory to the audience ; and you would have thought the gallery was coming down on that First Night of which I am telling. I forget whether “ Feudal Times ” was or was not styled a tragedy. It had a tragic ending. Though it would never have done to hang the object of noble hate, Walter Cochrane, the too authentic fact of his violent end had to be accommodated somehow. So he is stabbed to death by Archibald Douglas Earl of Angus, aided and abetted by other rebellious lords. The Douglas, it will be historically borne in mind, earned his soubriquet, “ Archibald Bell-the-Cat,” by his blunt offer to perform the feat, when, in council of the conspirators, someone recalled the old fable of the Cat and the Mice. In Mr. White’s play it is a distinct impeachment of the “ tender and true ” Earl’s chivalry that he should be one of Mar’s executioners, seeing that, in an earlier stage of the action, he had received a generous gift from his late antagonist, no less than the gallant grey which had carried Walter, and had withstood the shock of the black battle-horse. When I have said that Hoskins played a treacherous lord—treacherous to his fellow-traitors as well as to King James—I shall have ended with “ Feudal Times ; ” and here, for a month, we will pause.

It has already been observed that Phelps, having laid down as a part of his plan the gradual restoration of old plays to their integrity, went about his work with deliberation, taking opportunities as they arose for sweeping the stage of old conventional lumber, and for bringing back as much as possible of the author’s original purpose. For example, in opening his campaign with

"Macbeth" on Whit-Monday, 1844, he made no attempt to put in practice the scheme at which he hinted in his public address. The "Macbeth" of Sadler's Wells was the "Macbeth" of Drury Lane, with a less imposing array of tartans and a reduced chorus of witches, but, in all other respects, the mixture of Middleton and Shakespeare "as before." Phelps did not quite see his way to drastic measures of dramatic reform till he had well entered his third season; but, from the end of 1846 to the beginning of 1849, as quick a succession of honest revivals graced the stage of Sadler's Wells as were ever recorded in the life-work of an actor. It was in the two years 1847 and 1848, which I incline to reckon as inclusive of the most brilliant period of Phelps's managerial career, that fifteen First Nights were added to my list by Sadler's Wells alone; and of those fifteen all but two were strict revivals of Shakespeare's plays, namely—"Cymbeline," "The Tempest," "Macbeth," "As You Like It," "King Lear," "Twelfth Night," "Measure for Measure," "Coriolanus," "King John," "Henry V.," "Timon of Athens," "Much Ado about Nothing," and "The Merchant of Venice."

Of these plays, if I speak of all, I shall certainly take some of them out of their turns. As I have more than once intimated, my chronology does not pretend to the exactness which would be needful in a record; and, indeed, I may here take occasion to say that my February paper contained a slight anachronism concerning the Adelphi comedian Wright, who had commenced his London career at the time I linked him with Lymington theatricals. But I was not far wrong in my reckoning, and I find it was during a former visit to the New Forest that I got my first hearty boyish laugh out of the utterly independent and irresponsible fun of an actor who only acted when it pleased him to do so, gagging and mountebanking at all other times to his heart's content.

Last month we broke off our reminiscences with a brief account of "Feudal Times," the play in which an unpopular historical personage, Walter Cochrane, Earl of Mar, was rehabilitated for dramatic purposes. It so happened at that time—the second quarter of the present century—"feudalism" was not a favourite word with a large class of popular teachers, who, in their zeal for general enlightenment and "progress," could find no ground for toleration of anything in the past which did not accord with their

ideas of modern improvement. Ignoring the source of all such knowledge as even they themselves possessed, the self-appointed instructors of that age were accustomed to speak of mediævalism as a state of things without one redeeming quality ; of its learning as ignorance, of its warlike spirit as bloodthirsty violence, and of its enterprising hardihood as piracy and fraud. These sweeping charges were mostly levelled against personages of the kind harmlessly resuscitated by the reverend gentleman who supplied Mr. Phelps with a drama likely to suit his purpose. Moralists, didactic and satirical, the Howitt as well as the Jerrold school of writers for "the people," looked coldly if not frowningly on "Feudal Times"; but when, a few months later in the same year, Mr. White furnished the stage of Sadler's Wells with another five-act play, the title of which was "John Savile of Haysted," the moralists of both schools nodded propitiously. As all the good people in this play were of the simpler if not lowlier class of English life, and all the bad people were titled profligates or minions of the Court of Charles I., the serious and comic schools of popular criticism were agreed that "John Savile of Haysted" was to "Feudal Times" as gold is to silver. This was not the opinion, however, of Mr. Phelps himself, nor any prominent member of his company ; and when it is said that alterations were forced on the author and the management by the unmistakable sounds of disapprobation which disturbed the favourable verdict of the first few nights, the question *will* obtrude itself, "May not the critical moralists have been wrong for once?"

"John Savile of Haysted" was one of those plays I should never have gone to see a second time, and "Feudal Times" I saw twice or thrice. Still, Mr. White's later work at Sadler's Wells deserved the highest praise it got, and that was really high. It was well written, and was capitally acted by all who had a part in it. The last act spoilt it, and, having once done this, no alteration could set that last act in the right way afterwards. When you have painted your picture, or carved your statue, or written your book, or mixed your bowl of punch, the thing is done. Think not to improve your dubious middle-distance by painting out the team of wagon-horses and substituting a broken bridge ; keep your chisel from the nose of your finished work of sculpture ; don't cut out that smart bit of dialogue from the library scene in your penultimate chapter just to work it in at the

close, where it will not tell half so naturally ; and, above all, squeeze not another drop of lemon-juice into the festive compound, as to the right flavour of which you are troubled with misgivings. Depend upon it, in either case, you'll only make the thing worse than it was before. As the superfluous drop of acid in the mixture at Sadler's Wells required counteraction, a lump of sugar was unwisely tried, and the result was not, as I have heard, satisfactory. Better acting than on that First Night I have seldom seen ; but some of it gave one the impression of being painfully strained, and at such high pressure as would be difficult of repetition after many nights. As a matter of fact, many nights were not imposed as a test of endurance, either on the stage or in front of the curtain.

(To be Continued.)



Mysteries and Miracle Plays.

BY DOVER ROBERTON.

THE word "mystery" applied to early representations of scenes taken from the Gospel was not a new one in the history of dramatic effort. Ages before the Mysteries of Isis and Eleusis had commanded the attention, if not the respect, of the heathen world, though the character of these performances was quite distinct from the subsequent Christian Mystery. The Ancient Mystery was esoteric and secret, carefully excluding all but the initiated, whereas the Christian Mystery appealed to the people at large, and at a time when almost universal ignorance prevailed was a powerful means of rough instruction in most of the prominent features of Biblical history.

The old classic drama was like its architecture, and indeed all its art, severe, rigid and bound inseparably with an overpowering tradition. The new drama was the result of Gothic influence working upon Christian culture and establishing its characteristics of freedom, redundancy, grotesqueness and naturalness.

The taste for scenic representation, cultivated and gratified by the Greek and Roman drama, still remained unimpaired when Christianity superseded the old Pagan superstitions of Southern Europe. In the northern parts indeed Paganism remained, not as a generally accepted religion, but rather to furnish the groundwork for comic representations of the deities, in which obscenity and boisterous mirth were the prominent materials.

Meanwhile the strongly picturesque character of the Christian ritual, saturated as it was with Greek influence, tended to suggestions of a dramatic kind.

Probably the earliest indication of this influence is to be found in the painted scrolls depicting important scenes from the Bible, and providing a sort of running commentary on the portions of Scripture that were being read. The *antiphoniæ* and *responsoria* too, a kind of chanted dialogue, materially heightened the interest of the service and supplied the office of the Greek chorus.

Very early in our era many paraphrases and imitations were

written treating of Biblical subjects, but as they all followed the strict lines of classical literature, and were apparently mere exercises in literary industry, they cannot reasonably be assigned any definite position in the dramatic roll of Christian Mystery. The life of Moses—the Querolus—the Judicium Vulcani—are specimens of this school of literature, ranging from the sixth to the ninth century, while the so-called dramas of the nun Hroswitha, about the year 980, are admittedly Latin prose imitations of Terence.

In the fifth century “The Adoration of the Magi,” “The Marriage at Cana” and several other similar scenes lending themselves to vivid spectacle were represented by *tableaux vivants*, and seemed to gain immense popularity.

The rite, however, of all others that supplied strong dramatic material, and gave a zest and purpose to the mystery, was the exhibition of the burial of Christ on Good Friday. Here elaborate action was introduced and the whole scene was gone through in realistic fashion, concluding with the lowering of the body into a grave.

The dramatic conception expanded and suggested dresses suitable for the various characters in the play, while exits and entrances now came to be regarded, and a more extended *dramatis personæ* gave additional *vraisemblance* and greater vitality to the performance.

The antiphonal chant still formed a prominent part, supplying the course of the story when the players were absent, though in some of the MSS. I have consulted there are indications that the antiphonal lines were merely spoken and not sung.

The “Feast of Fools,” and the “Feast of the Ass,” introduced by the patriarch of Constantinople in the tenth century were intended to offer a counter-attraction to the heathenish shows that up to that time took place. In order to gratify the popular requirements for revelry and carousal so long associated with heathenism it was found necessary to permit a considerable amount of license in these Christian Festivals.

The consequence was that the maddest and most licentious scenes followed. The maskers sang obscene songs, played dice upon the altar and mocked in their drunken ecstasies the sacred offices of the Church, frequently tearing their clothes from their bodies in the furious excitement.

With the period of the Crusades a craze fell upon Europe for adventure and sight-seeing that roused the imagination and created ideals, demanding recognition in the domain of dramatic representation.

For some time the lay element had been growing larger, brought about in a great measure by the appearance of the *homines vagi* or wandering jugglers, an order of professional mummers and jesters, who seem to have been the lineal descendants of the mimes and sorcerers of heathendom, and who cultivated and perpetuated the spirit of buffoonery to such a purpose that in the Carnival of modern days may be distinctly recognised their potent influence.

The readiness of wit and the skill in acting the more difficult characters as the Mystery gradually expanded into a more complex work made these men very popular, and caused their services to be eagerly enlisted whenever they appeared in the towns. Their acting was usually of the broadest farcical kind, though in complete sympathy with the audiences, and therefore no limit was placed to their drollery and folly.

It is noticeable that the first marked evidence of dramatic development appears in France, due to that innate love of form and restlessness of character so obvious a feature in the French nation. As early as the eleventh century a considerable evolution had taken place in the drama, and to the simple incidents of Gospel history were added scenes illustrating the lives of the saints, thus widening very greatly the scope for characterisation and dramatic plot.

Moreover the vernacular was gradually gaining an entrance into the Mysteries by means of rather elaborate chants, called *epistolæ farsitæ*, in which the lay members took a part—the clerics chanting in Latin and the congregation in the vulgar tongue. As the plots became more complicated, the professional actors became a greater necessity, and, as Latin was entirely unknown to everyone except the priests, a large portion of the play was rendered, perforce, in the common speech of the people.

The method, too, of chanting the lines, or taking them perhaps in recitative, was giving way to simple declamation as the drama slowly, but surely, withdrew from the Church and established itself as an institution of the street.

The transition of the Mystery to the outside world occurred

at various times in different countries. That the plays had become extremely licentious is proved by a Papal decree of the year 1210 prohibiting the *ludi theatrales* from being performed in the churches.

The thirteenth century in France, and the fifteenth century in Germany, witnessed the almost complete secularisation of the drama, though the performances still retained a semi-religious aspect. On the festival days of the patron saints of various trade guilds a play was acted containing local hints and allusions much in the same manner as the "topical song" of our own times. Upon what principle of selection the guilds chose the subjects for their festivals is very hard to divine, though now and again there seems to be a suggestion of dry satire in the association.

"The Creation" was performed by the Drapers, "The Deluge" by the Dyers, "Abraham and Melchisedech" by the Barbers "The Purification" by the Blacksmiths, "The Resurrection" by the Skinners, and "The Ascension" by the Tailors.

At these performances a good deal was attempted in the way of realism, sometimes with rather disastrous consequences. For instance, I read of a certain Mr. John de Nicey, of Metrange, who in personating Judas "had like to have been stifled while he hung on the tree, for his neck slipped. This being *at length* luckily perceived he was cut down and recovered."

So far for Mystery lore, the progress of the drama through Miracle Play, Morality, and Interlude will be matter for a future article.



The Drury Lane Managers.

FROM KILLIGREW TO AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

PART IV.

DISASTROUS as were now the prospects of the stage, plenty of new candidates for the fascinating duty of management were not wanting. We find two fresh, eager hands, who were of the usual *bizarre* character. One of them was Sir John Vanbrugge—his real name, and not Vanbrugh, which has lately been assumed by an agreeable and promising actress of our day; the other, Owen MacSweeny. We have had soldiers, courtiers, lawyers—here was an architect! What the others were will later be shown.

Vanbrugge, as his name betokens, was of a Ghentish family, his grandfather being a wealthy merchant who had come over from that town. It need scarcely be said that he was a man of singular cleverness, when it is considered that he was not only a celebrated and most successful architect, leaving not only palaces as Blenheim and Castle Howard, but more enduring memorials in the shape of some admirable comedies, such as “The Relapse” and “A Tourney to London.” Further, he had served in the army, and was known as “Captain Vanbrugge.” So here he presented the curious and unusual combination of professions—soldier, architect, and dramatist. He seems to have been drawn to the stage by a casual acquaintance with Sir Thomas Skipwith, who at least had the art of drawing persons to the profession. His plays, of course, are leavened with the grossness of the time; but, in a little pamphlet which I possess, he defends his pieces from this charge of grossness in a most innocent fashion, and goes so far as to declare that any lady might put them on the same shelf with her prayer-books! So earnest is his pleading that it is quite evident that he sincerely believed that the charge

was unjust ; which seems, in an odd way, actually to support Charles Lamb's well-known fanciful plea, urged with so much pleasant ingenuity ; it, in short, supports the idea that these writers almost believed that they had a decalogue of their own, and that intrigue was a fitting and harmless pastime for a gentleman, or that unmistakably gross incidents and expressions, to their dulled and depraved instincts, were but natural. This coarseness seems to have been a mode of giving utterance to their feelings—perhaps on the principle that profane swearing used to be claimed to be necessary in the navy to give force to an order, or as coarse terms are habitually in use by the lower classes to fortify their conversations.

This combination of quite an amateur architect with an amateur dramatist is rare, and the only similar instance of this combination that we can call to mind is that of Beazely, who built the present beautiful and well-designed Lyceum Theatre, and also the ill-fated Theatre Royal, Dublin, which was almost as imposing an edifice. Sir John was soon tempted to display his powers in building a new theatre, selecting for the site that on which the present opera house in the Haymarket stands—the third which has been reared there. The builder of the two palaces which we have named was likely to produce something very imposing or magnificent, and the result was a splendid theatre. It may be said that the theatres of two centuries ago exceeded those of our generation—as we may gather from the prints that have been preserved—in state and spaciousness. This house, to build which thirty “persons of quality” put down their hundred pounds apiece, was described as a grand, vast, and triumphal piece of architecture, but to this every property of use and convenience had been sacrificed. “For what could their vast columns, their gilded cornices their immoderate high roofs avail, when scarce one word in ten could be distinctly heard in it ? Nor had it then the form it now stands in, which necessity, two or three years after, reduced it to. At the first opening it, the flat ceiling, that is now over the orchestra, was then a semi-oval arch, that sprung fifteen feet higher from above the cornice ; the ceiling over the pit, too, was still more raised, being one level line from the highest back part of the upper gallery to the front of the stage ; the front-boxes were a continued semi-circle, to the bare walls of the house on each side. This extraordinary and superfluous space occasioned

such an undulation from the voice of every actor that, generally, what they said sounded like the gabbling of so many people in the lofty aisles in a cathedral. The tone of a trumpet, or the swell of an eunuch's holding note, it is true, might be sweetened by it ; but the articulate sounds of a speaking voice were drowned by the hollow reverberations of one word upon another. To this inconvenience, why may we not add that of its situation ; for at that time it had not the advantage of almost a large city, which has since been built, in its neighbourhood ? Those costly spaces of Hanover, Grosvenor, and Cavendish Squares, with the many and great adjacent streets about them, were then all but so many green fields of pasture." It had accordingly to be altered ; still, being built for an opera, it was hard to expect it to suit comedies and dramas. Captain Vanbrugge, however, was not successful in his venture, and, though he struggled gallantly against the various contending and rival influences, he had soon to succumb. There next appears upon this troubled and disorderly scene another manager—a gentleman "from the sister isle"—Mr. Owen MacSweeny, a name which he later changed to simple Sweny or Swinney, just as his countryman Maglaughlin transformed *his* name into the more euphonious Macklin. This person had musical tastes, and had written several pieces, such as "The Quacks," &c. He was a pleasant specimen of the jovial Irishman, and who, with little talent, got on by his wit, or "wits," and good humour. He, however, fell completely into the hands of the crafty Collier, whose victim he eventually became. We have a friendly sketch of him. "At this time, then, the master of Drury Lane happened to have a sort of premier agent in his stage affairs, that seemed in appearance as much to govern the master as the master himself did to govern his actors ; but this person was under no stipulation or salary for the service he rendered, but had gradually wrought himself into the master's extraordinary confidence and trust, from an habitual intimacy, a cheerful humour, and an indefatigable zeal for his interest. This person has been well known in almost every metropolis in Europe." He had succeeded in establishing himself as director of the new opera at the Haymarket, and seemed likely to prosper there, when Collier, armed with his licence and influence at Court, required him to surrender this post to him, under pain of being silenced, requiring him to take over instead the bankrupt concern at Drury

Lane. When things began to mend there, and a gleam of prosperity returned, this griping Collier began "to cast liquorish eyes" at his old venture, and had the effrontery to require a fresh exchange. Poor Sweny resisted, but was really helpless, and, as he would be excluded from any theatre or employment if he declined, had to go back to the almost bankrupt Opera House. Here, in about a year, he was quite ruined, and had to retire to France.

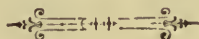
Sweny has been admirably sketched by Cibber, and not a few managers of our time but would grapple with hooks of steel, so invaluable an "acting manager."

"He remained twenty years an exile from his friends and country, though there has been scarce an English gentleman who, in his tour of France or Italy, has not renewed or created an acquaintance with him. As this is a circumstance that many people may have forgot, I cannot remember it without that regard and concern it deserves from all that know him. Yet it is some mitigation of his misfortune that, since his return to England, his gray hairs and cheerful disposition have still found a general welcome among his foreign and former domestic acquaintance." "Yet," adds this supposedly ill-natured man, with real feeling, "few have, with so little reproach, run through the various turns of fortune, that on the wrong side of threescore he has yet (*i.e.*, 1739) the open spirit of a hale young fellow of five-and-twenty; that, though he still chooses to speak what he thinks to his best friends with an undisguised freedom, he is, notwithstanding, acceptable to many persons of the first rank, and that any one of them (provided he likes them) may now send him for their service to Constantinople at half a day's warning; that time has not yet been able to make a visible change in any part of him, but the colour of his hair from a fierce coal-black to that of a milder white." For this amiable, well-drawn character we might find at least one pattern in the profession of to-day.

It must be said, however, that as he grew old Sweny did not maintain this high *prestige*. He unfortunately contracted an attachment to the famous Woffington which was to present a most ridiculous spectacle of infatuation. People returning from Paris reported how they had seen "old Sweny" and his flame seated in one of the boxes of the theatre. But in the very year of his death—1754—an unseemly squabble took place behind the scenes

between this obstreperous actress and Mrs. Clive, owing to one taunting the other with the thinness of the house. The language used by the ladies is described as appalling. Presently an old gentleman who attended Mrs. Woffington got into altercation with Raftor, Mrs. Clive's brother, whom he struck with his cane. The other, "very calmly," it is said, seized him by the jaw. "Let go my jaw, you villain!" roared Mr. Sweny—for it was he. "Throw down your cane!" roared the other; and the noise of the scuffle was all but heard by the audience. At this time the venerable champion must have been about seventy-six years old. He was then well off, with money to will, having, on his return from exile, procured a place in the Customs, and being, moreover, "Keeper of the King's Mews." It is well known that his favourite, who was a Roman Catholic, made a solemn act of conformity to the Established Church in this year (the present writer has seen the entry), which, it was always stated, was done to secure the legacy "old Swiney" intended to leave and left her. She died in 1760, six years after inheriting.

To be continued.



Our Musical-Box.

AS I pointed out last month, the one commanding trump card in Colonel Malpeson's weak hand of *prime-donne* has proved to be Madame de Hesse-Wartegg, *née* Minnie Hauk. In the parts of Carmen and Zerlina alike, both of which display her vocal and histrionic talents to remarkable advantage, she has drawn great audiences to Covent Garden Theatre, thereby conclusively demonstrating that genuine ability of an exceptionally high order never fails to secure enthusiastic public support in this much-maligned metropolis. Of all the Carmens I have seen and heard, that of Minnie Hauk has hitherto most completely realised my ideal of Merimée's *bizarre* heroine—of the fiery, fanciful, fickle Tsigane, instinct with all the strange changefulness and *sauvagerie* that characterise the gipsy nature. The gifted American artiste's original conception of this difficult *rôle*, however, has of late been softened down, and, if possible, rendered more sympathetic than before by some masterly touches of pathos, going far to reconcile the cruel coquette and reckless light-o'-love to an audience which Minnie Hauk compels to pity as well as condemn the creation of her genius. More particularly in the death-scene, in which her Carmen formerly displayed an inflexible stubbornness and unconquerable pride to the very last gasp, the moderations to which I have alluded are noticeable. With approaching dissolution, Carmen's heart, which she has hardened against her luckless soldier-lover, melts towards him, though his knife has struck her the deadly blow; and a flicker of her old love-flame prompts her to caress his face with her weakened hands as he bends over her in futile despair at the dreadful, irrevocable deed he has done. This is a very intelligent and touching innovation, highly deserving of recognition at the hands of the public, such as I am glad to say it obtained on the night of Madame de Wartegg's first appearance this season on the operatic boards. I must not omit to add that her voice is even fuller and richer in quality than it was three years ago, and betrays not the least falling-off either in compass or flexibility. In a word, to hear her sing and see her act is a greater treat than ever.

An interesting musico-literary feature of the past month was the publication in Murray's Magazine of a lively and admirably-written

paper on "English Opera," by Mr. Carl Rosa, whose name is identified in the popular mind with the subject of his article. What Mr. Rosa does not know about English Opera—which, as he is careful to point out to his readers, is the term by which it is found necessary to specify opera sung in the language of this country—is not worth knowing. Consequently, what he has written on this important topic is eminently worth reading. To begin with he frankly admits that State subvention for art purpose is unobtainable in this country, the English being a practical people who find that it answers their purpose to build up great national institutions on a solid foundation of private enterprise. For my part, I am of opinion that British practicality is greatly exaggerated, by foreigners as well as by themselves, and that their attitude towards the arts, in particular, is conspicuously unpractical. But Mr. Rosa is quite right in the conclusion at which he has arrived with relation to State subventions, which, as far as the promotion of musical taste is concerned, are not unnaturally repugnant to a legislature in which a cultivated musician, to the best of my belief, may be looked for in vain. In a country which has delivered itself up as a prey to party politics, Parliament cannot be expected to manifest the least sympathy with art or literature. Taking up more general ground, however, Mr. Rosa does not think that State subvention, in any country, is essential to the establishment of opera upon "a firm and financially sound basis." It handicaps the manager, makes him the slave of Ministers and committees, and casts the cold shade of officialism over all his enterprises. This is in every respect true. On the other hand, but for the subventions accorded to French, German, and Italian opera houses those institutions could not be kept open for three hundred nights a year, as they now are—I refer more particularly to the Court theatres in Germany—and would, indeed, probably collapse altogether, ruining their *impresarii*, in the manner hitherto so copiously exemplified by the great London opera houses. The Imperial, Royal, Ducal, or Republican subventions accorded to "national" opera houses on the Continent—in some cases amounting to as much as £30,000 a year—combined with low salaries, rigid administrative thrift, a salutary abstinence from the engagement of "stars," and a large *répertoire*, enabling the management to change its bill seven times a week, if needful, solve the problem of how to give nightly performances of fair quality all the year round at cheap prices, and yet to show a surplus of receipts over expenses in the annual budget. I do not for a moment assert that subventioned opera houses offer sensational attractions in the way of executant talent to their customers; as a matter of fact, they do not; but I say that, as a rule, they provide entertainments fully worth the money paid at the doors, and balance their accounts satisfactorily at the end of the year, which has hitherto been far from the case with short-season Italian opera enterprises in London, the largest, wealthiest, and most populous city in the world.

Mr. Rosa's remarks about opera in Germany are correct and to the point. It is, he justly observes, not progressing either in creative or executive power. "The true art of singing is fast losing its traditions." What is called a heroic tenor in the Fatherland, we Englishmen should describe as a shouter. Mr. Rosa, himself a German by birth, recognises the fact—to which I have recently called attention in another place—that "the accuracy of ear among the German public is much below the standard of an English audience," and aptly points out that "it is this natural accuracy of ear which is one of the most potent signs that music is not, as has often been suggested, an unknown quality in the Englishman's constitution." He has studied the natives of his adopted country very carefully, as will be seen by the following extract from his sagacious and instructive article:—"Englishmen like a good play, and if they could have a strong drama with good music wedded to it (this is, after all, the real meaning of opera), they would like it still better. By fostering this taste, and with a little moral support from those in power, I do believe that the English nation can be made to consider legitimate opera as one of their most rational amusements, as well as a necessary condition of musical culture and education." "The great majority of an Italian opera audience do not follow the words; but in English opera 'the play's the thing,' and any incongruity is soon discovered." Mr. Rosa is very much "on the spot" when he says, "What the English singer wants, as a rule, is more love for his art and less for his pocket;" and again, "When young singers can earn a good living by singing a ballad in an acceptable manner (and what English audience will not be satisfied with a ballad decently sung?) why should they trouble themselves about going through a severe artistic training of vocal studies, stage deportment, acting, and committing long and difficult parts to memory? Numbers of times applicants for admission to my company come to me—ready, as they say, to accept an engagement as *prima donna*, tenor or bass, as the case may be; and when I ask them 'What operas do you know?' they invariably answer 'None.' Imagine a similar answer being given by a person seeking employment in any other profession!"

Mr. Rosa takes a sanguine view of living English composers with regard to recruiting the *répertoire* of a future National Opera-House. Except as far as Mr. Goring Thomas is concerned, I regret to say I cannot share the able *impresario's* hopefulness. Mr. Rosa has given native composers, as he justly observes, "a fair chance at every available opportunity;" and with what result, except the cases of "Esmeralda," "Nadeshda," and, as I am glad to hear, "Nordisa?" How many thousands of hard-earned pounds, I wonder, was he out of pocket by "Moro," "Colomba," "The Canterbury Pilgrims," and "The Troubadour?" It is singularly generous on his part to speak

of these works, each of which was fraught with pecuniary disaster to him, as "operas which, although not attaining the dignity of master-pieces, may yet make one hopeful as to the future, and even compare favourably with some contemporary works of other nations;" but the great public, to which Mr. Rosa deservedly looks for support, did not take that view of them, and Mr. Rosa, however charitably disposed he may feel towards them, is far too good a business man ever to dream of reproducing them in any theatre under his management. Where is the British composer—with the exception above indicated—capable of writing an opera that will fill Drury Lane—not with paper, but with money—let us say twice a week through a six weeks' summer season? I fancy I hear a dozen well-known voices reply "Arthur Sullivan!" Yes; I know full well that he could do this thing, if he would. But he has applied his creative power heretofore in another direction, with great profit and renown to himself; and who shall say he can be induced to forego the lucrative certainties of comic opera for the glorious uncertainties of grand opera? Nothing, in my humble opinion, is less likely than that he should do so; and, failing himself, who are the others to whom the public can look, with confidence justified by their past achievements, for tuneful, intelligible, and expressive operatic music, such as the English ear delighteth to listen to? I trust that Carl Rosa, for whose musical judgment I have the highest respect, may be at this moment in a position to answer my question. Most regretfully, I confess, that I am not.

On the last day but one of March—and, therefore, too late for mention in my April budget—Alberto Raimo gave a morning concert (in the afternoon, of course) at 54, Queen's Gate, for the benefit of the sufferers by the Riviera earthquakes, and drew together a vast number of fashionable personages. Besides furthering a charitable purpose to the tune of nearly £120, I heard De Lara, Delphine Le Brun, and Carlotta Elliott sing, and Albanesi and Bottesini play, each one excellently well after his or her manner. The concert-giver's drawing-room orchestra discoursed sweet music—operatic selections for the most part, teeming with ever-welcome old melodies—most eloquently, and Signor Romili accompanied all sorts of songs with his customary tact and discretion. The only absolute novelty in the programme was a MS. song, "For Lack of Thee," by Miss M. A. Kingston, which, being a really clever and meritorious composition, was received with marked favour by an audience little inclined to make any display of enthusiasm, however mild. It was, moreover, admirably sung by Mdlle. Le Brun, who adds a charm to every musical work she interprets. I understand that "For Lack of Thee" is shortly to be published by Mr. Enoch, of Holles Street. On the previous afternoon, Mr. F. H. Cowen's annual song recital came off at Steinway Hall, and the *l'beneficiaire*, with the aid of such accomplished

vocalists as Mrs. Henschel, Misses Davies and Damian, Messrs. Lloyd and King, and several others of scarcely less renown, introduced several of his newer compositions to a numerous gathering of his friends and admirers. Two or three of Mr. Cowen's later songs, excellently rendered on the occasion in question, have already received notice in the pages of *THE THEATRE*. Those which were entirely new to me impressed me forcibly with the composer's versatility, grace of manner, and enviable gift of constructing pleasant and singable tunes. Such talents as those with which Mr. Cowen has been so lavishly endowed confer upon their possessor the most enviable of all rewards—popularity.

At one of the wonderful "Musical Evenings" of the German Athenæum which I was privileged to attend a short time ago, I heard Dr. Joachim play Tartini's "Teufelstriller," with a perfection that could certainly not have been surpassed by the Satanic soloist of the composer's memorable dream. Never within my remembrance has the inimitable Hungarian violinist's execution been more crisp and dainty, his tone richer and more velvety, his expression more sympathetic and fascinating. The programme was a splendid one, and every item of it was performed to perfection. "Little" Max Pauer, who, had he lived in the reign of Frederick William I., would assuredly have been kidnapped, as well as his father, and drafted into the famous Potsdam Guard, played Haendel's formidable D minor Suite with unsurpassable freedom and exactitude, following it up by *the* most difficult of all Liszt's heartbreaking *fantasie*, that written on themes from "Don Juan," and adding, in compliance with a recall that was not to be denied, the "Campanella," from the set of Liszt-Paganini studies. Dear old Piatti "sang" Schubert's "Staendchen" divinely on his favourite 'cello, and in consort with Joachim, Hollaender, Deichmann, Weiner, Brousil, Heydrick, and Mahr, gave us a superb rendering (unrehearsed, too!) of Mendelssohn's noble string octett, composed when the "wonder-child Felix" had just entered his teens. The flower of the great German colony in London had assembled to partake of this rare musical treat, for my share of which I was indebted to the invitation of Karl Armbruster, than whom no riper musician was present on the occasion in question. Max Pauer, by the way, played magnificently at both the concerts given by Herr Hausmann at Prince's Hall, under the title of "Violoncello Recitals." What can I say in praise of Hausmann himself that will do justice to the splendour of his tone, the vigour and delicacy of his *technique*, and the high intelligence of his reading of Bach, Beethoven, Corelli, and many other eminent classical composers? As an executant he is at the very top of the tree, and no laudation, however fervent and justly expressed, can raise him any higher. Let us be thankful for the achievements of so noble an artist, and listen to them with bated breath and reverent admiration.

I have received a "Marche de la Guerre" (why not "War March?") composed by Mr. Mozart Wilson (Chudleigh Bros.), which deserves favourable notice. It is strong and stirring, well-harmonised, and provided with three distinct *motivi*, each of which is tuneful and easy to remember. I am told that it has been arranged for and will be played by the orchestra at Toole's Theatre, and that the band of the Honourable Artillery Corps have taken kindly to it. *Mes compliments, Monsieur Mozart Wilson!*

CLAVICHORD.



Our Play=Box.

"LADY CLANCARTY."

An Original Drama in four acts, by the late Tom Taylor, revived at St. James's Theatre, on March 3, 1887.

King William III. ...	Mr. MACKINTOSH.	James Hunt ...	Mr. POWELL.
The Earl of Portland ...	Mr. BAUER.	Captain Gille ...	Mr. DE VERNEY.
Lord Woodstock ...	Mr. WEBSTER.	Trenlet ...	Mr. A. SIMS.
Lord Charles Spencer ...	Mr. H. WARING.	Clink ...	Mr. HENDRIE.
Lord Clancarty ...	Mr. KENDAL.	Officer of the Guard ...	Mr. MYERS.
Sir George Barclay ...	Mr. B. GOULD.	1st Smuggler ...	Mr. GODDARD.
Sir John Friend ...	Mr. R. CATHCART.	2nd Smuggler ...	Mr. BATSON.
Robert Charnock ...	Mr. BRANSCOMBE.	Lady Clancarty ...	Mrs. KENDAL.
"Scum" Goodman ...	Mr. H. BEDFORD.	Lady Betty Noel ...	Mrs. B. TREZ.
Knightly ...	Mr. WARDE.	Susannah ...	Miss B. HUNTLEY.
Rokewood ...	Mr. PENFOLD.	Mother Hunt ...	Mrs. GASTON MURRAY.
Vaughan ...	Mr. VIVIAN.	Princess Anne ...	Miss ETANTON.

For the production of "Lady Clancarty," at the St. James's, as far as the scenery, dresses, appointments, and stage pictures go, there can be nothing but praise—unstinted, genuine praise; for the acting, with but two exceptions, there can be no praise at all. This sweeping condemnation may at the first glimpse seem ungenerous and too severe, but a visit to the theatre in King-street will, we feel certain, justify our disapproval and compel an acquiescence with our views.

It may be urged that the theatre is not the right one for such a play, that the audience who fill it nightly have no sympathy or liking for an historical-heroic form of entertainment, and that the gloom with which the most thrilling situations are received, the apathy with which the tender speeches and romantic passages are listened to, must have its effects upon the actors and actresses engaged in the performance.

The ignorance of the modern youth and smart maiden is proverbial, but it was with much astonishment and no little disgust that we sat in the stalls of the St. James's Theatre the other evening and tried to follow the interesting story (so well told and charmingly touched upon by the dead author) from amidst a crowd of what is called fashionable people.

Said one man to his companion, immediately following the scene where the King leads Princess Anne through the Earl of Portland's closet to see his beloved tulips, "Isn't this

awfully vulgar! they all of them keep bobbing curtsies and making bows like so many fools. Awfully vulgar I call it!"—evidently imagining that the curt nod of the head and the two-finger hand-shake of to-day must have been in vogue in the seventeenth century. Then a pretty young lady to our right wondered why the "little Dutchman" alluded to his dear Mary so tenderly, and enquired audibly if the picture of the Queen that hung at Whitehall was the portrait of the woman he wanted to marry.

A third considered "Scum" Goodman "so dirty and horrid!" when he fell exhausted on the stage after his rescue from the mob. A fourth stated in a loud clear voice (essentially one of the characteristics of a nineteenth-century girl) that she thought the play awfully stupid, but that Mrs. Kendal's last gown was sweet, and she would like to know who made it out of the four firms mentioned in connection with the costumes. In fact, to any one deeply interested in the play we certainly do not recommend the stalls at the St. James's Theatre as either a pleasant or enlightened neighbourhood; for the occupants only seem to be there because it is "the thing" to do, and chat on regardless of everything and everyone but themselves. It would take the most electric and marvellous acting in the world to rouse or attract such people, and assuredly there is nothing of the kind to be found in the last production of Tom Taylor's celebrated play.

From beginning to end, except when either Mr. Mackintosh as King William, or Mr. Waring as Lord Charles Spencer (an excellent performance) are on the stage, the story is given in a tame, lackadaisical, *affected* manner.

Mr. Kendal has not the smallest notion of the character of Lord Clancarty; his accent is as variable as the English climate, his bearing impossible in the necessary dress, his delivery short and choppy when not so rapid as to be positively indistinct. He brings an atmosphere of Piccadilly-clubdom to bear on the chivalrous, impulsive, genuine Irishman, with the result of utterly destroying the character in every word and every movement. But then, outspoken chivalry and impulsiveness are "bad form" now-a-days, and so, of course, Mr. Kendal declines to depict them. He must consider his audiences, and give them what they can best understand.

And to those who saw Miss Ada Cavendish as the heroine, what a disappointment must rise as they watch the present Lady Clancarty! There is not one ring of sincerity or real feeling in the whole performance. Mrs. Kendal minces her words in the same extraordinary fashion as she alters her gait. She is not a frank, romantic girl—she is a woman of the world, studied in thought, speech and gesture, and ignorant of the meaning of the word "heart." And yet she should be so marvellous an actress, once free from the affectation that of late years has been gradually closing round her. Even now, when she chooses to forget herself and to let her voice go she can startle and

command our unbounded enthusiasm; but the next moment the affection is back, and our admiration checked. She makes a handsome picture, and, to our thinking, scored the most in her scene in the prison yard, but it is not a good performance; nor is it worthy to be classed among her long list of histrionic successes.

The King of Mr. Mackintosh is admirable in every sense of the word; nothing is forgotten, nothing wanting; it is a veritable and artistic triumph. But what shall be said for the rest?—the effeminate Lord Woodstock of Mr. Webster, the utterly unmirthful Lady Betty Noel of Mrs. B. Tree? Surely never was there anything more unlike the feather-headed maiden than Mrs. Tree's delineation. This lady is as totally at sea in such a part as Mr. Kendal is in Clancarty; her teasing is effected in a heavy æsthetic manner, redolent of peacock's feathers and blue jars, and her voice is as painfully startled as the perpetually surprised expression of her face, which only wants variety to be so handsome. Mr. H. Bedford makes "Scum" Goodman repulsive enough, and in the last act is most realistic; but he is out of the picture—he is too cockney and melodramatic. The absurd and objectionable "make-up" of Mr. Hendrie as Clink, the gaoler, should be altered at once, while the Jacobite conspirators want dash and more bearing, for at present they are but a sorry lot—Mr. B. Gould as Sir George Barclay being the only good exception, and Miss B. Huntley as Susannah might infuse some spirit into her fear of the smugglers in the first act.

But having dismissed the actors, our task is more pleasant. In this age of careful and expensive productions there has been none more beautiful, more accurate and splendid than "Lady Clancarty" at the St. James's Theatre; no detail, however trifling, has been neglected. All is beautiful and grateful to the senses, and if the play should fail to enthrall and touch the mind there is a feast of stage pictures that cannot fail to give complete and utter satisfaction to the eye.

E. R..

"THE SNOWBALL."

First produced at the Strand Theatre, February 3, 1879, when it met with a favourable reception.

"The Snowball" was to have been revived, at the Globe, on February 28. Owing to Mr. Penley's severe illness, however, it did not come out till a fortnight later, on March 14th, with the following cast:

Felix Featherstone ...	Mr. CHAS. H. HAWTREY.	Mrs. Featherstone ...	Miss VANE FRATHERSTONE.
Uncle John ...	Mr. W. J. HILL.	Ethel Granger ...	Miss BLANCHE HORLOCK.
Harry Prendergast ...	Mr. W. DRAYCOTT.	Penelope ...	Miss FANNY BROUGH.
Saunders ...	Mr. NORMAN BENT.		

By a strange coincidence, the advent of "The Snowball" was also that of a heavy fall of snow, which took everyone by surprise. Mr. Sydney Grundy's three-act comedy, an adaptation of Scribe's "*Oscar; ou le Mari qui Trompe sa Femme*," is a neat piece of workmanship, bright, clever, witty, and thoroughly amusing. It has the not too common quality in farcical pieces of being perfectly harmless; it incites to merry laughter without stooping to vulgarity, and is altogether most

acceptable. The plot is simple enough. Felix Featherstone and his wife go separately to see a reputed naughty play on the sly, and see each other at the theatre. He returns first, and, unaware that he has been seen by his wife, places a note in her work-basket; this note tells her that he knows all, and insists on seeing her alone in the sitting-room after all have retired to bed. He is enjoying the thought of her confusion at being found out, but he has reckoned without woman's wit. With the help of her sister and the latter's *fiancé*, Mrs. Featherstone contrives to make it appear that her maid Penelope has found the note; an answer is penned in which Penelope expresses her surprise at being asked an interview by her master, and threatens to tell his wife everything. From this point the unfortunate Felix has not a moment's peace: everyone in turn threatens to disclose to his wife that which he has *not* done, and his misery, like a snowball, rolls up into a huge mass, but ultimately melts with equal facility under the sunshine of explanation. The best and most ingenious idea in the play is that of the maid who is ordered by her mistress to frighten Felix, unless he does a certain thing, with the appalling sentence—"I'll tell everything!" Penelope is absolutely in the dark as to the why and wherefore of what she is bid to say, but she is sharp enough when perceiving the effect produced by her words, to turn them to account in blackmailing her master, and mistress too, by the threat of telling this "everything" which she does not know. This creates the very best scenes. Miss Fanny Brough in this part, originally played by Miss Lottie Venne, shows herself an accomplished *comédienne*; her quiet humour is most effective, yet never overdone. Exaggeration would ruin such a part: Miss Brough is simply perfect. Those who remember her passionate pathos in "La Passionaria," her touching rendering of the beautiful words in which Petrella describes herself, must be struck with the true artistic instinct that enables her to be equally good in romantic drama and farce. Miss Vane Featherstone and Miss Blanche Horlock are both very bright and pleasing as Mrs. Featherstone and her sister. As Uncle John, the inquisitive, irascible old gentleman who will *not* believe in his nephew's innocence, Mr. W. J. Hill is capital. However grotesque the character undertaken by him, Mr. Hill always imbues it with an appearance of truth: his looks of conviction and mock earnestness are truly excellent. Mr. Wilfred Draycott is a good Prendergast. Mr. Penley being still on the sick list, the part of Felix was undertaken by Mr. Charles H. Hawtreys, and it could scarcely have fallen into better hands. With judicious taste Mr. Hawtreys kept the impersonation within the bounds of comedy; the situations gained instead of losing by his not allowing his acting to degenerate into exaggerated burlesque, and were the more intensely comic from the fact that the man who found himself in such an absurd predicament was a quiet and gentlemanly fellow. The best compliment to be paid to Mr. Hawtreys is that he understood the

character. "The Snowball" was well received, as it deserved, and should have a long run. It was preceded by a one-act little drama by Mr. A. Elwood, entitled "After Many Days," given for the first time. This well-written and interesting little piece was well acted by Mr. W. Lestocq, Mr. Stewart Dawson, Mr. Wilfred Draycott, Miss Florence Haydon, and Miss Blanche Horlock, the latter being especially charming.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

"THE GREAT FELICIDAD."

A Comedy in three acts by H. M. Paull, produced at the Gaiety on March 24, 1887.

Charles Armstrong ...	Mr. F. H. MACKLIN.	Musician ...	Mr. ROBERT NAINBY.
Walter Prothero ...	Mr. ARTHUR DACRE.	Hackett ...	Mr. FRANK FENTON.
Sir George Kensett ...	Mr. GEO. CANNINGE.	Mrs. Armstrong ...	Miss AMY ROSELLE.
Guy Kensett ...	Mr. BRANDON THOMAS.	Mrs. Prothero ...	Miss Cissy GRAHAM.
Frederick Morris ...	Mr. F. M. PAGET.	May Prothero ...	Miss CHRISTINE MAYNE.
Mr. Hake ...	Mr. STEWART DAWSON.	Mrs. Leblanc ...	Mrs. GEO. CANNINGE.
Mr. Sanders ...	Mr. ERIC LEWIS.	Servant ...	Miss MITCHELL.

On March 24th, at the Gaiety Theatre, Miss Amy Roselle's special matinée brought to the fore a new dramatic author, Mr. H. M. Paull. From his pen comes a three-act comedy, "The Great Felicidad," a play undoubtedly clever, but certainly unwholesome and dangerous. Shameless sin; callous raillery at virtue and honour; swindling so clever that it becomes an art—we have seen this before on the stage, and alas! too often has it forced itself upon our notice in real life, but not unmixed with good. When such materials are used for the building of a play they should be handled with great circumspection. An author is perfectly justified in showing us the seamy side of life, if the moral be that an unrelenting Nemesis overtakes the shameless wretch who glories in sin and dishonour; or that even some of the worst sinners, if they have but a grain of good in them, can with resolution redeem their past and rise to a better life. To flagellate the wicked, and strengthen those who have fallen from weakness, is a consoling and noble purpose.

The great mistake in "The Great Felicidad" lies in the fact that all the bad characters are either so brilliantly clever as to almost entrap one's sympathy, or so unblushingly disreputable that one is in danger of mistaking their effrontery for pluck, and admiring it. Retribution threatens them at one time, but they ultimately come off leaving but few feathers behind. There lies the mistake, there lies the danger. At the outset of the piece, two ill-matched couples, the Protheros and the Armstrongs, are introduced to us; they are outwardly friends, and visit, but the two men hate each other, and Muriel Armstrong treats Walter Prothero with icy coldness. In years gone by these two were engaged, and were devotedly attached to each other; the old love still lingers in the depth of their hearts, yet they have drifted apart and married—married, as we soon learn, out of pique, not untinged with a revengeful feeling. During a long absence of Prothero, Muriel, receiving a newspaper containing a false announcement of his

marriage, at once gives way to wounded pride, and accepts a man she believes to be worthy of respect, but whom she can never love, as she confesses to him. Another motive for this haste shows her want of self-reliance: she seeks in marriage a protection from a rejected lover, Guy Kensett who persecutes her with his admiration. It is this same Kensett who has forged the paragraph in the paper, only to be refused and made way for Charles Armstrong. Walter Prothero, on hearing of Muriel's marriage, without seeking to ascertain the cause of her faithlessness to him, at once falls into the net of a scheming aunt with a young and pretty niece on her hands, thus marrying a woman he treats with indifference and can hardly tolerate. Walter and Muriel accidentally find themselves alone for the first time since their marriages, the result of the interview being that they learn the terrible mistake they have made. Want of faith and pique have parted them, honour must now keep them asunder; still, he has not the courage to give up meeting her in society. Painful as their false position is, it is about to become far more terrible when they discover the real character of their helpmates. Mrs. Prothero, the neglected wife, a frivolous, unprincipled woman, has fallen in love with Muriel's husband and glories in her shame; accepts jewels from him, and steals her husband's letters at his bidding. For Charles Armstrong is nothing but a fashionable swindler, the promoter of a company for a bogus mine, the Great Felicidad. Unscrupulous and cynical, he coolly tells Guy Kensett, his agent for the mine, and whom he knows to be in love with his wife, that his only reason for marrying was to be able to settle his ill-acquired fortune on his wife, thus securing it from creditors in case of accidents, and he sneeringly laughs at Muriel's simplicity for thinking him so generous.

And Guy Kensett, what shall we say of him? This man—as dishonourable a swindler as Armstrong, but far more clever, who does not recognise the saying of "honour among thieves," and ruins his accomplice by a stab in the dark, an anonymous paragraph in the papers—treats the woman he professes to love with the cruelty of a tiger, and leaves her with an insult on his lips. As I have said before, it is not that such a character should be placed on the stage that is objectionable, but that he should meet with no punishment. When the truth about the Felicidad is made public and Armstrong has to fly the country, Kensett remains in all security, content in the comfortable fortune he has made out of the dupes who have bought his shares in the mine, and triumphant in all the ill he has successfully brought about. Besides, the character is made so fascinating that one finds oneself admiring the most despicable of men. And what punishment befalls Armstrong? He flies the country, taking with him his wife's savings and his friend's wife. Bad, utterly bad as she is, Mrs. Prothero loves this man, but he does not think of running away with her until he learns she has an income of her own. And Walter and Muriel, this weak, misguided, faithless and faithful

couple, what is the end of them? An exclamation of joy on the part of Walter when he hears of his wife's elopement, and freedom and reunion in the future by the means of divorce. Truly this ending is most unpalatable. And truly it is to be regretted that the author should have elected to show us the worst side of humanity, worse than reality let us hope; thank God virtue and honour are not such a *rara avis*. Clever dramatists are not too plentiful, and 'tis a pity they should waste their talent. Mr. Paull has real merit: he can construct a play, draw character, and write powerful scenes; some of his dialogue is excellently written. Mr. Paull should not be discouraged because he has made a mistake: let him select a healthy subject, and he is sure to succeed.

From a histrionic point of view the performance was remarkably good. Miss Amy Roselle, looking handsomer than ever as Muriel, acted with so much power, pathos, and true earnestness as to almost make one forget how weak a creature the heroine was; if one could not altogether sympathise with Muriel, it was impossible not to admire Miss Roselle; fortunate is the author who has such an actress for an interpreter. Mr. Dacre also made the very best that could be done with the shifty Walter Prothero. Miss Cissy Grahame fulfilled the unpleasant task of representing Mrs. Prothero, with a true appreciation of the character. Mr. F. H. Macklin acted with boldness and effect as Armstrong, but lacked the requisite *finesse*. Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Canninge and Mr. Eric Lewis were very good in small parts, the latter making quite a hit. The most interesting and most vicious character in the play, Guy Kensett, was acted to perfection by Mr. Brandon Thomas. Polished and gentlemanly in manner; cool, subtle and impudent at one time, the bitterness and concentrated rage and passion that moved him at another, capped by the grinning look of hate and triumph of his final exit—all this showed most careful study and the highest artistic touch; and yet it was all so simple and natural, so perfectly free from exaggeration, that the character became doubly dangerous by being in such excellent hands. Mr. Brandon Thomas is likewise an accomplished stage-manager, and the performance, produced under his special supervision, went off without a hitch. Both author and performers were recalled.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

"MAN AND WIFE."

A Dramatic Story, in Four Acts, by WILKIE COLLINS.

(First produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, February 22, 1873.)

Acted for the first time at the Haymarket Theatre, March 29, 1887.

Sir Patrick Lundie	Mr. H. KEMBLE.	Duncan	Mr. ULICK WINTER.
Geoffrey Delamayn	Mr. F. S. WILLARD.	Lady Lundie	Miss HENRIETTA LINDLEY.
Arnold Brinkworth	Mr. WILLIAM HERBERT.	Blanche Lundie	Miss AGNES HEWITT.
Mr. Speedwell	Mr. A. M. DENISON.	Mistress Inchbore	Mrs. E. H. BROOKE.
Mr. Moy	Mr. P. BEN GREY.	Anne Silvester	Mrs. JAMES BROWN-POTTER.
Elisha Priggs	Mr. CHARLES COLLETTE.		

"Man and Wife," as a play, first saw the footlights on February 22, 1873, when Wilkie Collins dramatised his own novel for the Prince

of Wales's Theatre, and Mrs. Bancroft appeared as Blanche Lundie. The story is too well known to need to be told here, except in mere outline, and for the sake of the few readers whose memory is uncertain. Anne Silvester, the devoted friend and governess of Blanche Lundie, has loved, "not wisely but too well," a man whose birth and position are those of a gentleman, but who at heart is as selfish and brutal as he is brainless. How, then, could Geoffrey Delamayn gain the affections of this simple, trusting girl? Alas! poor Anne, she is not the first foolish woman whose heart has gone out to a man acclaimed as the hero of the hour. A hero, not as the words were understood in the old chivalric days; the champion and winner in many athletic feats and races, that is all, still the kind of man the popular element makes a favourite of and likes to adulate. Love, honour, life, she has entrusted all to the care of this man, who forgets his promise to make her his wife until she threatens to destroy herself, then he reluctantly consents to a secret marriage. As they are in Scotland this is easily arranged. They are to meet at a little village inn and declare themselves to be man and wife before witnesses, this, according to Scotch law, being a legal marriage. Anne goes first, and Geoffrey is about to follow when the news that his father is dangerously ill calls him away. He entrusts to his friend Arnold Brinkworth the task of going to Anne Silvester and explaining matters, but as no names are to be mentioned at the Inn, Arnold is to ask for "his wife," as Geoffrey would have done. Meanwhile, Geoffrey's relations have found a rich wife for him, and, a conversation on the Scotch marriage law showing him a way of escape, he declares that Arnold Brinkworth and Anne Silvester are man and wife, having allowed themselves to pass as such at the Inn. Since then, Arnold has married Blanche Lundie, and is therefore supposed to have unknowingly committed bigamy. But ultimately it is proved that, by a double letter in which Anne and Geoffrey signed themselves "Your wife" and "Your loving husband," they were already married before Arnold visited the inn. The violent emotion of rage felt by Geoffrey at being foiled brings on a stroke of paralysis and he dies, his heart having long been affected by over-training.

When "Man and Wife" was revived at the Haymarket on March 29, this story seemed to interest the public but moderately. Indeed, I think neither H.R.H. the Prince of Wales nor any part of the audience had come there for the play. Curiosity or interest were centred in the new recruit from the amateur ranks, Mrs. James Brown-Potter. For months this American lady has been the talk of society, in which she held a prominent place and has so many friends. That she was about to adopt the stage as a profession was affirmed and denied ten times over, and has proved true in the end. On both sides of the Atlantic she has been admired as an amateur reciter, and in her own country as an amateur actress; though I hardly think she can have had much experience in the latter capacity. But

even with an experienced amateur, the part of Anne Silvester is an unwise choice for a *début*. From the rise of the curtain until its final fall, Anne Silvester is placed in strained and harrowing situations; yet the character should be acted with simplicity as well as with depth of feeling. Such a *rôle* is most difficult to the inexperienced. The danger with an amateur was that she would probably either under or over-act the part, and Mrs. Brown-Potter chose the latter extreme. The happy possessor of a pretty face and pleasing smile, she has an unfortunate trick of opening her eyes till they seem ready to start out of her head, giving one an impression not of emotion or pain, but of insanity. Such a look might suit a raving Cassandra, but not poor Anne Silvester. The stage-walk adopted by her in the first act precluded all idea of grace; it was shambling, ungainly, and altogether startling. As the play proceeded this was allowed gradually to make room for a more simple gait, and if Mrs. Brown-Potter were well advised she would discard it altogether. Another serious fault is the use of stilted and tragic gesture applied to modern comedy. That she is in earnest is very evident, as also that she possesses emotional power; but this is wild, untamed, and exaggerated at present, and requires the curb of study. I do not wish to judge this lady harshly. It has fallen to my lot to review the efforts of quite as many amateur as professional actresses. I can well appreciate the difference, yet I have seen some of the former bloom into excellent artistes; but I must confess that had I left the theatre at the close of the third act I should have considered Mrs. Brown-Potter's future on the stage as rather hopeless. Even now it must remain among things doubtful, yet in the last act she did so much better, there were touches of true pathos and real dignity, that while they underlined, by contrast, the ranting and staginess of what had gone before, they gave hope for better things. Mrs. Brown-Potter is very young, and has still much, much to learn. Let her remember that the greatest praise an actress can receive is to be told that she is simple and natural; for, contradictory though it may sound, this is the highest degree of art. Nothing is more unnatural than untutored nature. Mrs. Brown-Potter may become a good actress, at present she can only be looked upon as a novice. Nothing worth gaining is easily attained; careful study and hard work are indispensable. Mrs. Brown-Potter appears to be in great earnest; let her bear in mind that exaggeration is her stumbling block, and her conquering this will be her first step onward.

Mr. E. S. Willard, as Geoffrey Delamayn, has added one more successful impersonation to his already long list. The nonchalant selfishness of the man, the assumption of good fellowship towards his friend when he wishes to make a cat's paw of him, his callous brutality when he casts off the woman he has ruined, all this was excellently delineated. If the brutal side of the character is the most prominent, this is not Mr. Willard's fault. If Mr. Wilkie Collins

showed different phases in Geoffrey's manners, which could be pleasing enough at times, in the novel, he has not done so in the play. It is worth a visit to the Haymarket Theatre only to see Mr. Willard in the last act. The altered look of the man broken down in health, the last outburst of rage from one whose nerves are not under control, and the death, all this was truly admirable. Mr. William Herbert, the original Arnold Brinkworth, resumes his old part with excellent result, proving both sympathetic and natural. But Miss Agnes Hewitt mistakes the character of Blanche Lundie; she is hard and unsympathetic, and has not the required easy sprightliness, while Miss Henrietta Lindley, as Lady Lundie, proves by her good acting that true artistes never consider a part, however small, to be beneath their careful attention and rendering. The same may be said of Mrs. E. N. Brooke as the Landlady of the Inn. Mr. H. Kemble is a very good and genial Sir Patrick, and Mr. Charles Collette gives a very clever sketch of Bishopriggs, elaborated to repulsiveness. There is little opportunity for scenic display in the piece, but the Summer House and the Picture Gallery make pretty backgrounds for the action. The revival was received in a friendly but not enthusiastic fashion. Its run will probably depend on the endurance of the curiosity to see the new actress.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

"HELD BY THE ENEMY."

A New Drama in five acts, by William Gillette, was produced at the Princess's Theatre on April 2, 1887.

Colonel Charles Prescott...	Mr. CHARLES WARNER.	Adjutant-General Marston	Mr. F. DOWSE.
Major-Gen. H. B. Stamburg	Mr. CHARLES OVERTON.	Captain Benton ...	Mr. R. SHAW.
Lieutenant Gordon Hayne.	Mr. E. W. GARDINER.	Colonel Harrison ...	Mr. WILLIAMS.
Uncle Rufus...	Mr. S. CALHAEM.	Lieutenant Massen...	Mr. W. S. PARKES.
Thomas Henry Bean	Mr. YORKE STEPHENS.	Corporal Springer ...	Mr. WATSON.
Brigade-Surgeon Fielding..	Mr. WILLIAM RIGNOLD.	Orderly Hinton ...	Mr. F. COLLINGS.
Assist.-Surgeon Hathaway	Mr. WALTERS.	Euphemia McCreery	Mrs. CANNINGE.
Lieut.-Col. McPherson	Mr. E. GURNEY.	Susan McCreery	Miss ANNIE HUGHES.
Captain Woodford...	Mr. E. W. THOMAS.	Rachel McCreery	Miss ALMA MURRAY.

A sense of freshness and an absence of stale conventionality and claptrap were very noticeable features before Mr. W. Gillette's story was half developed. It was not that we were seeing scenes from the American war suggested by actual incidents; it was not that the uniforms were strange, and the general character of the play unfamiliar; but, apart from all this, it was soon found that the author had got a good story to tell, and was about to relate it very well. In constructive skill "Held by the Enemy" is better than nine-tenths of the dramas of to-day that acquire enormous reputations. Two of the scenes, indeed, are as strong and as vivid as any that modern dramatists have given us for some time past. A young Southern American lady is affianced, apparently against her will, to her cousin. Her father and relatives are desperately espoused to the Southern cause, and would consider it little less than heresy for the impulsive girl to marry a rebel. But love is doomed to flow into channels of its own: it will not be checked or impeded. So when

the Confederate town is in possession of the Federals, and the Southern family are virtually prisoners of war, who should the Confederate girl fall in love with but the Federal officer who is in command of the garrison? Meanwhile the girl's affianced husband is acting as a spy, and is caught in the Federal lines red-handed, with suspicious despatches upon him. He is tried by Court Martial, and his rival has to give evidence that will condemn him or save him. It is an awful predicament. He is bound by his soldier's oath, and he is anxious, like a loyal gentleman, to save the lover of the woman he adores. Suddenly and impulsively, and without any apparent justification, the girl denounces her adorer as a traitor who has manufactured false evidence to get an inconvenient rival out of the way. The Colonel is both astonished and tongue-tied. He is willing to submit to degradation and dishonour all for her, when suddenly up jumps the man on his trial, owns himself a spy, refuses to accept life at the expense of an honourable rival, and seals his certain death.

The scene is very striking as it stands; it would be better still if some explanation could be given of the girl's extraordinary attitude towards a man she knows and believes to be both honourable and faithful. In fact, I cannot help thinking that the author made a mistake in not introducing early in the play the girl's father, a hot-headed, desperate Southerner, whose will was law. His power over his daughter would give her some excuse for denouncing the Federal officer, however much she loved him. The old maid, who is useless for the purpose of the story, should have been turned into the heroine's father, a stern parent of a very pronounced pattern.

The second situation is equally good, perhaps better. The devoted girl with two strings to her bow is anxious to smuggle the body of her cousin through the enemy's lines on the pretence that he is a dead man. Up to a certain point she has succeeded admirably. The surgeons are got out of the way, the man is certified to be dead, the pass has been obtained to bear out the body. But there's many a slip! An officious surgeon, suspecting some trickery, is determined to examine the apparent corpse. His orders are defied, and it becomes the duty of the Federal officer once more to be involved in an affair of discipline. Anxious once more to do the bidding of a woman who has before outrageously insulted him, he puts the cantankerous surgeon under arrest for disobeying the General's orders. Once more the good faith of an innocent man is seriously compromised. Opportunely, the General himself arrives, and, noticing the cabal, determines that the body shall be examined. To the horror and surprise of everyone the man is dead. He has died during the altercation!

The serious side of the drama is relieved with several amusing comedy scenes, irrelevant, no doubt, and occasionally redundant, but so admirably played by Miss Annie Hughes and Mr. Yorke Stephens that they are thankfully received. I am glad to learn that an

objectionable incident in the last act has been modified. The young artist correspondent plays a joke—rather a ghastly one—on his innamorata by pretending that he had lost an arm. The girl, who believes it, actually laughs at the misfortune, and asks him where he has buried his arm. Such a jest is possible and passable when the audience *knows* that it is a joke, but when they believe it is true the jest is simply repulsive. There is scant opportunity for any very striking acting. The drama plays itself. The best and most showy character is that of the young spy, who is enabled to win our sympathies in a natural fashion. Once more Mr. E. W. Gardiner has shown that he has muscle and material in him, and he is gradually working his way well to the front. Miss Alma Murray, a charming actress, does her best to disguise the inconsistencies and erratic tendencies of the heroine, and though Mr. Warner is continually compelled to suppress emotion, to discipline his natural energy, and to hold his passion in reserve, I have seldom seen him act in recent times so well, so moderately, and with such a keen sense of art. It must be the most difficult thing in the world for an emotional actor to play a man who has thorough command over himself. The old General of Mr. Charles Overton could not have been better played. It was exactly right in tone, physique, and martial dignity; and Mr. William Rignold was happily chosen for the blustering and self-important surgeon, who, in the American army, either has unlimited power or has taken strange liberties. There is one noticeable novelty in the play. It contains no single bad man or woman in it. There is no villain in broad cloth or in petticoats. It is a healthy relief. How tired we are of the conventional villain who is doomed in melodrama to walk off in handcuffs, or to sneak away abashed with some sneer on his lips. A melodrama without a villain is a novelty, but it is a refreshing circumstance. The play is as pure in sentiment as it is clever in workmanship. I, for one, prefer it to all the realistic pictures of male and female depravity that the world can suggest or a Zola can invent. I hope Mr. Gillette will soon bring us another drama equally good.

C. S.



Our Omnibus=Box.

The failure of Zola's disgusting modern version of "Phèdre" at the Vaudeville, in Paris, the rout of the apostle of realism on his own dung-hill, surely ought to warn the realists and naturalists, and painters of modern vice and depravity as they exist among us, against any attempt to use the stage as their pulpit for disseminating their unwholesome doctrines. There are already signs that they are edging their way into public notice. Proposals are already made to dramatise the novels that depict the lives, the passions, and the meanness of the worst of women and the most selfish of men. The other day when an audience very properly turned up its nose at the canonisation of selfish vice and the "nuptial benediction of the divorce court," some impulsive young women prated about a "dramatic ring," formed and organised to put down all that was original and unconventional; and clamoured for freedom and license on the stage! That cry fell very flat years ago, when urged by a stronger voice than was ever owned by the pioneers in petticoats of modern Zolaism. Heaven help us if the apostles of the new school are to nauseate and sicken us with the illicit loves of diseased women for their step-sons, and to describe as art the moral leprosy and unbridled depravity of nasty women and nastier men! The reality of lust, the selfish cunning of designing women, the worship of the world, the nameless atrocities of men "whose God is their belly and who mind earthly things" are hideous and appalling enough in everyday life. They shock us and sicken us when we meet them in the flesh. We do not want to go to the theatre to gloat over the seductive wiles of a Sappho or the meretricious maunderings of a Messalina. Zola has been defeated and hissed by a theatrical audience in one of the most depraved capitals in Europe. Let his puny imitators take heed before they commit a similar outrage on good manners in this country. We don't want North-western District Nanas or Pimlico Phèdres on any stage, or the representation by them in any company that has the slightest claim to self-respect.

Life is too short, and it would be useless if life were longer, to discuss matters of taste with so perverted and stereotyped offenders against all recognised rules of etiquette and common courtesy as the obstinate editor of a sufficiently well-known dramatic print. Such work as I have done, for good or ill, during a long service in the

interests of the stage, stands on record. I am content if it is judged by such as are capable of discriminating between what is good and what is bad. But as regards my pitifully aggressive antagonist I fail to remember one circumstance in his career that would justify his assuming the character of censor as to what is honourable in a writer and loyal in a man. I trust, however, that in the estimation of my peers I have never printed a statement which, having been proved on incontestable evidence to be inaccurate, misleading, and unjust, has not been recalled by a frank and manly apology. Here let the matter rest.

I made a mistake last month when I stated that "Le Comtesse de Sommerive" was by Sardou. The play, called in America "Alixé," is by Théodore Barrière and Madame de Prébois. My friend Mr. Richard Patrick Davey, I am delighted to find, agrees with me that the subject and the play are wholly unfit for the English stage. He says, "I read the play and pronounced it 'ghastly and quite unfit for the English stage.'" *Voilà tout !* What a mountain out of mole-hill. But out of the mole-hill and the gossip anent it a certain dramatic print managed to formulate a gratuitous charge of *mala fides* against a perfectly innocent person, which charge, though proved to be false and groundless, has never to this hour been withdrawn.

The musical parody called "Ruddy George; or, Robin Redbreast," produced at Toole's on March 19, cannot lay claim to much literary or musical excellence. It is a weak effort to burlesque a burlesque, and at the very outset proclaimed its failure to attract attention as, in any sense, an artistic work. Fortunately, its lines have fallen in pleasant places, and the various actors struggled with a heroism worthy of a nobler cause to get some element of humour out of the barren materials. Mr. Ward achieved a considerable amount of success in the song, "I have no voice, but I always know my part," and in other ways made the most of his opportunities. Miss Marie Linden, with scant occasions offered for showing her delicacy and skill, gave a clever dance in imitation of the musical hall artiste. In the burlesque of Rutland Barrington, Mr. G. Shelton managed to originate some happy bits of foolery, while keeping within the bounds of legitimate satire, and gained for himself a large amount of applause. The three portraits of Sir Gilbert, Sir Arthur, and Sir D'Oyly, though slightly caricatured, were true enough to the originals to make the resemblance evident. The really funny part of the performance was monopolised, as usual, by Mr. Toole, who in the following speech gave fresh evidence of his undiminished power of tickling the appetites of his audiences:—"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I daresay you may be surprised to see me in front of this curtain at such a moment; but, as you know, it has become a fashion for the manager to say a few

words *after* a new piece, I thought I would make a change, and say a few words *before* the new piece commences. The other day an esteemed brother manager explained why he did not act in a play—because he had an actor in his company who could act better than himself. Now the author and composer of this little piece wanted me to play in it; but, as there is a great deal of singing in it, and I have gentlemen in my company who can sing better than myself—(I am a little disappointed that someone has not said ‘No, no’; I rather relied on that). However, this being the case, I thought it best to give you a rest, as there is a great deal of myself in this theatre—perhaps a little too much. (Again I am disappointed: I expected ‘No, no.’) One word more respecting the title of the piece. I’ve had thousands of letters on the subject. Some think ‘Ruddy George’ is not sanguinary enough; if that is so, perhaps friends will communicate with me on the subject. I may see my way to starting a prize competition for the best title, and a special letter-box can be placed at the stage door for the convenience of competitors. At any rate, if the title is disapproved of, it can be changed every week, or every night. Ladies and Gentlemen, I will not trespass on your time any longer, as I see the conductor is frowning at me, being anxious to commence. Before retiring, permit me to say that you are all looking very well, in fact, I never saw you looking better; but then, I always do fancy you look better in this theatre than anywhere else. For the present, good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and my earnest wish is, that you may like the new piece.”

A comedietta, by Mr. J. J. Hewson, entitled “My Cousin” (originally performed at Belfast, October 16, 1885), was produced at the Olympic on the 21st March. Notwithstanding the hackneyed materials used in its construction the author has written brisk and pointed dialogue, and has arranged the movements of his puppets with a considerable evidence of stage experience, and a perception of dramatic effect. John Perryble, big-hearted, ignorant, wealthy, and with an ambition to see his son rise to the circles of aristocratic seclusion, plans a marriage with a rich heiress, but, as so often happens in such commercial proposals, the son views marriage in a different light, and prefers, not unreasonably, to choose his own partner for better or worse. An irate and desperate parent is the result, soon, however, to be worked upon by softening influences that transform anger into joy, and, in the true spirit of fairy tale, poetic justice is done. The elder Perryble was admirably sustained by Mr. Edward Terry, his power of alternating humour and pathos being a delicate and appreciative piece of acting. Miss Clara Cowper represented the orphan girl with a charming grace, and proved her capability to become a serviceable and intelligent comedy actress. Mr. W. Calvert, Mr. T. Eames, and Miss Stanhope made the most of their

parts, while Mr. T. Clulow and Miss Maria Jones contributed not a little to the general success of the performance.

The benefit accorded to Mr. William Greet at the Royalty on the 30th March must have been most gratifying to the recipient, in a sympathetic as well as in a pecuniary sense. The theatre was crowded from floor to ceiling, while the fare provided was of that varied nature appealing to each peculiarity of mental palate, and providing now a bright piece of sparkling comedy or a pretty bit of sentiment and love, and then some broad rollicking song or lecture to bring back the appetite to appreciate the refinements of more delicate viands. In "A Household Fairy," Mr. Morton Sêlten and Miss Eva Sothern played with discrimination and a just appreciation of the many subtle points of the play. Miss Camille D'Arville was a charming songstress, and roused such enthusiasm by her rendering of "A Bird of Love" that nothing but an encore would satisfy the audience. Mr. Charles Collette and Mr. Harry Paulton made the sides ache with their drolleries, and Mr. S. Caffrey and Mr. E. J. Lonnen kept up the roar of laughter to quite an alarming extent. Mr. Hayden Coffin sang "The Pride of the Troop" exquisitely, accompanied by the composer. Miss Sylvia Grey sang sweetly, and danced a skipping-rope dance in marvellous fashion. Mr. Willie Edouin and Miss Alice Atherton in mock tragedy had it all their own way, and revelled in the fun and burlesque in a most natural and infectious manner. In the space at our disposal it is impossible to detail all the good things that were offered, but suffice it to say that a most enjoyable afternoon was the general experience.

Meilhac and Halévy's play of "Frou-Frou" was revived at the Olympic on the 30th March. It was eventful chiefly as providing an opportunity to Miss Grace Hawthorne for showing the distinct advance she has made in artistic conception. As the light-hearted, sensuous, and wayward Gilberte she portrayed admirably the ever-changing moods of caprice and gaiety, of sunshine and of storm, and succeeded, where many other actresses have failed, in securing the hearty sympathy of her audience. Mr. Leonard Outram as Henri de Sartorys was all that could be desired; his completely natural manner, devoid of any stiffness or want of ease, rendered his acting a most enjoyable feature of the performance. Mr. Laurence Cautley played Valreas with much discrimination, throwing a large amount of force into his passionate lines, and pleading in most persuasive of tones. It was a misfortune for Mr. Blatchley to assume an accent that certainly marred an otherwise creditable impersonation. Miss Houliston was in perfect sympathy with the character of Louise; while Mr. Frank Wood and Miss Lizzie Fletcher were entertaining and reliable as the Baron and Baronne.

"Masks and Faces," a three-act comedy by Tom Taylor and Charles Reade, was revived at the Opera Comique March 26th. It was a happy inspiration of Miss Vaughan to reproduce a play abounding in smart, though occasionally over-strained, dialogue, and providing situations full of interest and dramatic effect. Peg Woffington—frail, beautiful, and with a depth of character now and then appearing through the crust of gay conventionality—is always a popular subject, and Miss Vaughan produced a very pretty picture of the hapless girl, though she failed to depict the pathos incidental to a true conception of the part. Small blame, however, is to be attached to a partial failure in such an exacting piece of characterisation. Mr. James Fernandez was an entirely satisfactory Triplet, the grim humour, never saturnine, alternating with a far reaching pathos, stamped his performance as a most excellent one. Sir Charles Pomander, in the hands of Mr. Forbes-Robertson, was an extremely odd personage, calculated, we should say, to rouse the ire of a sensitive author; while Mr. Lewis Waller as Ernest Vane was too cold to rouse the faintest enthusiasm. As Mabel Vane Miss Julia Gwynne looked pretty, but failed to seize any definite idea of the character. Mr. Lionel Brough was somewhat ponderous as Colly Cibber.

A dramatic performance was given at the Bow and Bromley Institute on 28th March by Mr. A. H. Deakin's company, "The Parvenu" being the piece presented. Mr. W. T. Clark, as the purse-proud, vulgar, but not at bottom bad-hearted Ledger, played with considerable power, asserting the claims of Philistinism in most amusing fashion. Sir Fulke Pettigrew, as represented by Mr. Gerald Godfrey, occasionally descended to gestures quite out of keeping with hatchments and rent-rolls, and thus gave advantage, not intended by the author, to the combative Ledger. Charlie Tracey in Mr. Earle Douglas's hands was simply a loungeur, and apparently did not require any higher art than the ability to smoke numerous cigars. Mr. Deakin was rather a cold lover, though he had a charming Gwendolen to inspire him in Miss Lily Fane. Mrs. Lennox Browne played Lady Pettigrew admirably, and bore herself with distinguished grace. As the merry little rogue, Mary Ledger, full of infectious laughter and burlesque prudery, Miss Kittie Claremont showed the keen appreciation she possesses for delicate and subtle touches of comedy. We hope to see more of this talented young actress.

"The Open Gate," a new domestic drama in one act, by C. Haddon Chambers, was produced at the Comedy on the 28th March. The idea embodied in the play is a very pretty one, but it demands a delicacy of treatment such as in the present instance it has not received. In days gone by a lady, now with silvery locks, had quarrelled with her lover at parting. A rustic garden gate seemed to

mark the spot where the rupture took place, and accordingly was kept open as a symbol of the love that had once passed through and might some day return. In the next generation the same quarrel is repeated by a niece and her true lover, and there seems a likelihood of this state of things becoming perpetuated when an old man, grey-haired and feeble, at last arrives and closes the gate, and claims his old love "Auntie," and shows the young people that there is such a thing as repentance and faith. Miss Elsie Irving, Miss Armytage, Mr. J. C. Buckstone, and Mr. E. Girardot no doubt did their best with the materials, but hardly realised to any appreciable degree the delicate poetry of the play.

"The Man of Business," a four-act play adapted from Björnsterne Björnson's "En Fallat," by W. Chapman and W. Olaf, was produced at St. George's Hall on the 26th March. Norwegian traditions have not so far been favourable to the development of dramatic material, and in this adaptation we have little more than a bald translation of the original story, which is merely a tedious disquisition of a somewhat painfully moral kind. There are suggestions here and there that might be valuable in the hands of a clever playwright, but in the form in which they now appear they do but make the chaos more profound. There is absolutely no plot worth mentioning. Herr Alberg, notwithstanding a difficulty in English pronunciation, played with considerable pathetic force. As Jacobsen Mr. Sweetman was much appreciated, and was loudly applauded for an admirably delivered speech over his wine. Miss Morland made a charming Valborg, and Mrs. Stephenson as Mrs. Tjeldey was fairly successful. The other characters call for no special notice.

One of the best performances by amateurs I have seen was given on Saturday evening, April 2, by the members of the Paulatim A.D.C. in the pretty little Novelty Theatre. In "A Cup of Tea," the first piece presented, Mr. J. A. Symmons and Miss Blanche Hughes, as Scroggins and Lada Clara respectively, carried off first honours with their capital acting. The second piece, "New Men and Old Acres," was exceedingly well cast and played. Mr. J. G. Meade as Brown delivered his lines with point, and gave an impersonation of which a professional actor would not have been ashamed. Bertie, too, had a clever exponent in Mr. J. Grahame Slee, who, in conjunction with Miss Mabel Catterson-Smith as Fanny, created hearty laughter throughout. Mrs. Lennox Browne was the aristocratic Lady Vavasour to the life, and was of great service to the cast; while Mrs. O'Hagan as Lilian gave such an artistic impersonation that I could with difficulty believe I was listening to, and looking at, an amateur. Should she think of taking up the stage as a profession, Mrs. O'Hagan has much in her favour—beauty, grace, and charming vivacity. As

Lilian, she made full use of her natural gifts, and, in addition, made an artistic success. During the evening the Hanover orchestra rendered a good selection of music in admirable style.

A new poetical comedy, in one act, entitled "A Dark Night's Bridal," founded by Robert Buchanan on a story of R. L. Stevenson's in "The New Arabian Nights," was produced at the Vaudeville on 9th April. Henri de St. Valery, a young soldier, drawn in the romantic lines of mediævalism, finds himself overtaken by a storm in the neighbourhood of an old Burgundian castle, and seeks shelter there. The owner of the castle, Sire de Chasseloup, mistakes his guest for a lover of his niece, and very angrily demands that St. Valery shall marry the lady immediately, or submit to the ignominious process of strangulation. As only one course can be adopted, a love-making consequently ensues, at first of a rather stormy character, but ultimately maturing into a placid acceptance of the old sire's requirements. As a book for the study, Mr. Buchanan's little comedy would be most acceptable, but it seems rather out of place upon the stage. Miss Kate Rorke played the wayward Blanche in pretty, mock-coquettish manner. The Sire de Chasseloup of Mr. Royce Carleton was a somewhat stiff performance, and Mr. Wheatman and Mr. Fuller Mellish did not achieve any considerable measure of success.

A new comedy-drama, entitled "Ivy," by Mark Melford, was produced at the Royalty Theatre on the 16th April. Elinor, the daughter of Sir William Grainger, in opposition to the wishes of her father, marries a scheming adventurer named Pritchard, and this so enrages the old man that he makes a will leaving most of his property to his steward, John Sherwin. The steward tries to induce his master to reconsider the matter, and prepares a will in which the disobedient Elinor receives the bulk of Grainger's fortune. The testator dies, leaving apparently the second document unsigned. The villain Pritchard arrives with his wife, and schemes, for some time successfully, to get the property into his own hands, but is finally defeated, and the property falls into the hands of a young sailor, the accepted lover of Ivy Sherwin. This melodramatic story is, however, merely a setting to enable Mr. Willie Edouin and Miss Alice Atherton to perform a variety of extravagancies that seem to be very slightly connected with the course of the play. The audience manifested uneasiness at an early stage of the performance, and at last broke through the bounds of all decency, and hooted and yelled at the author until the theatre was transformed into a veritable bear-garden.

Few will read the record of the death of Mr. J. F. Young, the well-known actor, without a sincere regret for one who, having arrived at a good ripe age, has departed with all his honours full upon him.

Beginning life in a business capacity in London, he shortly sought a more congenial employment on the stage, having as a mere boy attained considerable notice as a reciter at school. Gaining experience in the provinces, then a splendid training for a hard-working and capable actor, he speedily rose to a position of acknowledged ability and power. Perhaps the finest impersonation in his *répertoire* was Sir Giles Overreach, though in most of the leading legitimate characters he was invariably recognised as a painstaking and efficient exponent. He was linked by association with the old traditional school of playing, but at the same time had sufficient power of individuality to essay modern parts with a touch of modern enthusiasm and spirit. His Eccles in "Caste," Middlewick in "Our Boys," and the old boatman in "The Guv'nor" will recall many a pleasant recollection of his versatility and force. Only a few years ago, under Mr. T. W. Robertson's management at Toole's Theatre, Mr. Young achieved a very great success as Isaac Skoone in "M.P.," and as the General in "Ours." Engagements followed at the Globe in "Our Regiment" and in the drama "Low Water," by Mr. Pinero, succeeded by a short sojourn at the St. James' Theatre with Messrs. Hare and Kendal. The "Caste" company seems to have been an early love, and to his old friends he returned, and remained there until his death. To all who had the pleasure and happiness of knowing his genial nature, and fine broad sympathy with his profession, his death will arouse every feeling of tender affection and respect.

In November, 1883, a brief sketch was given of the professional career of Miss Sophie Eyre, whose portrait appears in this number of THE THEATRE. Taking up the thread of the story from that time, Miss Eyre starred through the principal cities of the United States, playing Lady Macbeth, Nancy in "Oliver Twist," La Belle Russe, Zicka, Vera in "Moths," Lady Claire in "Maître des Forges," and Valerie in Sardou's drama, the time occupied in this tour being over two years. While completing an engagement at Wallack's Theatre, Miss Eyre received a cablegram from Mr. Augustus Harris, who was at that time contemplating the production of "A Run of Luck," desiring to secure her services. An engagement at Drury Lane followed, and on its termination Miss Eyre appeared in one or two *matinées*. She then decided, much against the wish of her friends, to abandon the stage altogether, but has since taken the advantage of the privilege of a lady, and has elected to again appear upon the boards in a drama adapted from the German by Mr. C. M. Rae, entitled "The Witch," to be produced at a *matinée* at the Princess's on the 26th April. It is also whispered that Miss Eyre intends to produce shortly "Helen of Troy," in which she will sustain the title rôle.

Mr. Gilbert Farquhar, whose portrait appears in the present number of THE THEATRE, made his first essay on the stage on the 31st January, 1883, playing Mr. Younghusband in "Married Life" and Barker in "Uncle's Will." So satisfactory was the financial result of this performance, that Mr. Farquhar, as a sort of thank-offering, sent £50 to Lady Strangford's Hospital in Egypt. Hard stock acting followed at the old theatre in Bristol, under the management of Andrew Melville, the actor's *répertoire* including a round of parts principally of the Robert Ffolliott and O'Grady class of Boucicault's Irish dramas. After some months of this discipline, Mr. Farquhar returned to London, and played Godfrey Plummer in "Ascot" at the Novelty, afterwards fulfilling an engagement at the Court in "All for Her." A tour through the provinces succeeded, first with Miss Sarah Thorne's company, then with Miss Villiers' "Fédora," and subsequently with Mr. C. W. Garthorne's "Impulse" company, a distinct success being made by the actor in the character of Sir Henry Auckland. Returning to London, Mr. Farquhar accepted an engagement at the Olympic, where, as Burnaby the Banker in "Alone in London," he appeared for the whole run of 110 nights. Later, as Squire Allworthy in "Sophia" at the Vaudeville, he has counted something like 300 performances of the one character. Mr. Farquhar has also made a tribute to literature, a short sketch called "Our Party" and a series of letters to "Mr. Punch" being among his successful efforts.

On the 20th April Mr. H. Beerbohm-Tree produced, at the Comedy Theatre, a new drama, entitled "The Red Lamp," for which Miss Marion Terry, Lady Monckton, Miss Filippi, and Messrs. C. Brookfield, Dodsworth, C. Sugden, and R. Pateman were engaged.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the Provinces, and Paris, from March 23, 1887, to April, 23, 1887:—

(Revivals are marked thus.)*

LONDON:

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| March 24 | "The Great Felicidad," comedy, in three acts, by H. M. Paull. Gaiety. |
| „ 26 | "A Man of Business," play, in four acts, translated from the Swedish of Björnsterne Björnson by W. Olaf and W. Chapman. St. George's Hall. |
| „ 28 | "The Open Gate," play, in one act, by C. H. Chambers. Comedy. |
| April 2 | "Held by the Enemy," drama, in five acts, by Wm. Gillette. Princess's. |
| „ 9 | "A Dark Night's Bridal," a poetical comedy, in one act, by Robert Buchanan, founded on a sketch by Robert L. Stevenson. Vaudeville. |

- April 11 "Run to Earth," drama, in four acts, by George Roberts. Elephant and Castle.
- " 11 "The Naturalist," musical sketch, written by J. Comyns Carr, music by King Hall. St. George's Hall.
- " 18 "To-night at 8," farce, by T. H. McCord and G. A. Toplis. Park Hall, Camden Town.
- " 18* "Madame Favart." Avenue.
- " 20 "Red Lamp," romantic drama, in four acts, by Outram Tristram. Comedy.
- " 22 "Christina," romantic drama, in four acts, by Mark Ambient and P. Linwood. Prince of Wales.
- " 23 "Bride of Messina," opera, in three acts, adapted from German by H. Müller, composed by J. H. Bonawitz. Portman Rooms.
- " 23* "The Bells" and "Jingle." Lyceum.

PROVINCES :

- March 24 "Twilight," musical comedy, in two acts, by William Geary. Band Room, Brentford.
- " 26 "Well Matched," comedietta, by Philip Havard. Ealing Public Hall.
- " 28 "Boys Together," farcical comedy, in four acts, adapted from Mountney Jephson's novel. Prince of Wales, Liverpool.
- April 1 "Sol Gandy," play, by H. Bellingham and William Best. Opera House, Leicester.
- " 4 "The Oath," drama, in four acts, by James A. Meade. Queen's, Manchester.
- " 4 "Kittens," musical play, in three acts, written by Fred. Lyster, music by J. M. Glover. Theatre Royal, Brighton.
- " 4 "Ivy," comedy drama, by Mark Melford. Theatre Royal, Manchester.
- " 11 "The Royal Watchman," comic opera, in three acts, written by William Boosey, music by F. L. Moir. Theatre Royal, Exeter.
- " 11 "An Irish Elopement," farcical comedy, in three acts. Queen's Theatre, Manchester.
- " 11 "Sample v. Pattern," duologue, in one act, by W. Sapte, jun. Alexandra, Liverpool.
- " 18 "Creeping Shadows," drama, in five acts, by Butler Stanhope. Theatre Royal, Birkenhead.
- " 18 "Hunt the Slipper," farcical play, by Fred. Lock. Opera House, Cork.

PARIS :

- March 21* "Amphitryon," comedy, in three acts, by Molière. Odéon.
- " 22 "En Revenant de la Revue," a ballet-divertissement. Eden.
- " 23 "Ninon," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Emile Blavet Paul Burani, and Emile André, music by M. Léon Vasseur. Nouveautés.
- " 24 "Retour d'Arlequin," a pantomime, by M. Raoul de Najac, music by M. Martinet. Press Club.
- " 25* "L'Age Ingrat," comedy, in three acts, by M. Edouard Pailleron. Vaudeville.

- March 29 "Le Tigre de la Rue Trouchet," comedy vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Pierre Decourcelle and Henri Kéroul. Menus-Plaisirs.
- " 30 "La Gamine de Paris," an opera-bouffe, in three acts, by MM. Eugène Leterrier and Albert Vanloo, music by M. Gaston Serpette. Bouffes Parisiens.
- " 30 "Jacques Damour," comedy, in one act, in prose, adapted by M. Léon Hennique from Zola's novel. Elysée des Beaux Arts.
- " 30 "La Cocarde," comedy, in one act, in prose, by M. Jules Vidal. Elysée des Beaux Arts.
- " 30 "Mademoiselle Pomme," a farcical comedy, in one act, by MM. Duranty and Paul Alixis. Elysée des Beaux Arts.
- " 30 "Un Préfet," a drama, in one act, by M. Arthur Byl. Elysée des Beaux Arts.
- April 1* "Le Procès Veuradieux," a comedy, in three acts, by MM. Delacour and Hennequin. Renaissance.
- " 2* "Bajazet," a comedy, in three acts, by Racine. Théâtre Français.
- " 2* "La Chatte Blanche," a *féerie*, in three acts and twenty-four tableaux, by the Brothers Cogniard. Gaité.
- " 2* "Le Bonhomme Jadis," comedy, in one act, by M. Murger. Théâtre Français.
- " 3 "Fatma l'plaisir d'y Venir," a *revue* by MM. Adrien Vély and Adrien Moch. Circle Pigalle.
- " 5 Re-opening of the Cirque d'Été in the Champs Elysées.
- " 6 "Le Bourgeois de Calais," a comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Ernest Dubreuil and Paul Burain, music by M. André Messager. Folies-Dramatiques.
- " 9 "Les Frères d'Armes," a drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by M. Charles Garaud. Château d'Eau.
- " 9* "La Belle Hélène," opera-bouffe, in three acts, by Offenbach. Variétés.
- " 15* "Adam et Eve," an operetta, in four acts, by MM. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché, music by Gaston Serpette. Nouveautés.
- " 16 "Renée," a play, in five acts, by M. Emile Zola. Vaudeville.

824, 2 nov 10 Mason





"I wish it was Spring all the year round, and that
Roses grew under our feet."

LADY TEAZLE—"SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."

MISS ANGELA FENTON,

THE THEATRE.



The Drury Lane Managers.

FROM KILLIGREW TO AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

PART V.

Returning now to Drury Lane, we shall follow its fortunes under the new triumvirate. When Collier was persuaded to retire, the reins of management were taken up by three actors, and the leading English playhouse was now to be controlled by the son of a sculptor, Mr. Holstein, and two Irishmen from Dublin. They were Colley Cibber or Cyber—the name was probably the German Sieber or Seiber—Robert Wilks, and Doggett. The latter we are reminded of every year by the well-known Doggett's "Badge," which is rowed for by Thames watermen without exciting the smallest interest in either the public or the candidates; and the liberality of the donor is about as feebly appreciated as that of the late Mr. Baddeley, whose cake is cut annually at Drury Lane. This introduction of performers to office was to prove most beneficial, and good houses and substantial receipts now began to gladden the hearts of the long-suffering shareholders. In our own generation, at this moment, almost every flourishing house in London is directed by actors, such as the Lyceum, Drury Lane, Court, Olympic, Strand, Globe, Toole's, Vaudeville, the exceptions being such theatres as are devoted to opera and burlesque. And it is likely that in the future this system will be further developed.

These three were persons of marked character. Doggett had the sensitiveness of his countrymen, feeling and resenting affronts or neglect which may have been imaginary; while Wilks represented the impetuous, quarrelsome Irishman. Cibber was the driving-wheel of the party, having a robust, combative nature,

and that most unhappy of all gifts—that of making enemies and of exciting the bitterest dislike.

It is surprising that no regular life of Colley Cibber has been written, or, indeed, that no suitable edition of his great theatrical book been issued. His character is an extraordinary one, from the mixture discordant of elements and the contrary judgments that it has excited. He seems to have been disliked and even hated by most of those who knew him, and to have certain malicious and even malignant elements in his nature which excited dislike. Yet anyone reading his remarkable book, with its brilliant knowledge of human nature, its character, its discrimination, its accurate judgment of men's transactions, its fair and even generous appreciation, would rise with a feeling that here was a man of extraordinary abilities, of a character superior to envy, ill-will, and other weaknesses. This singular contradiction is found in the case of Boswell, who is admitted to have been petty and often contemptible in his nature, but whose book is large and admirable in its treatment, as though written by a man of judgment, capacity, wit, and generosity. After nearly a century's discussion, no one has fairly solved this puzzle.

Cibber was one of those many-sided men, of which there have been not so many instances in the world. He was first of all an admirable writer of plays, and his comedies are even now occasionally revived, showing a breadth of treatment and dialogue, of the school to which Goldsmith and Sheridan belonged. At the same time, however, he was perhaps the most eminent of our many "adapters," an art which, by an odd contradiction, seems to have been almost exclusively developed by the most straightforward and self-dependent of nations. His most celebrated and successful adaptation is that of "Richard III.," which has held the stage for nearly two centuries; and, though the original version has been re-introduced and will always command the preference of the judicious, there is little doubt but that "So much for Buckingham!" will continue to be the darling of robust players and country audiences. He helped himself freely from Molière, and, above all, from his own contemporaries. Mention has been made of the gay and fashionable manager, Colonel Brett, Cibber's intimate friend, who succeeded in winning for his wife the notorious Lady Macclesfield, whose treatment of Richard Savage is so well known. This lady, having

detected her husband in some lapse, is said to have left her handkerchief on his lap, as a delicate mode of conveying her knowledge, though it seems difficult to associate delicacy of sentiment with such a person. This incident the ingenious Colley turned to dramatic profit, and it is to be found in his "Careless Husband." Again, his "Apology," as we have seen, is one of the standard pieces of English literature, while his controversies with Pope exhibit the vigour of his style in another department. Finally, he was an actor of much power and reputation. There is a picture of him in the Garrick Club, done when he was advanced in life, which has a Voltairean caste—and, indeed, he exhibited much of the malice, envy, and sarcasm of Voltaire.



The First Nights of My Young Days

BY GODFREY TURNER.

[FIFTH PAPER—*Continued.*]

The boldest and most salient piece of character drawing in Mr. White's historical play was Felton, the fanatic Irish soldier, who stabbed Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, at Portsmouth. George Bennett, who played this part, had a true conception of its nature, and seemed to let the morbid idea of the deed grow upon his mind, as a divine injunction, reading scriptural texts on his dagger's blade, and seeing wherever he turned a message from Heaven, writ, as it were, in letters of fire and blood. The personality of the Irish soldier was, indeed, discarded. Felton was dressed in black, somewhat handsomely, as I call to mind, and with more of flowing breadth and gloss than became a Puritan. Rather early in the play the predestined slayer of Buckingham is seized, apparently, with a cataleptic fit; and George Bennett, in closing the act with a back-fall, such as, to a man of his weight, must have entailed a serious shock, left the audience in a curious state of doubt as to his reappearance, it being a moot point whether or not he was to be accounted dead for good, or only in

a swoon. Indeed, it seemed rather like an anti-climax that he should have come to life again as he did. But there was work for him that required his presence in the flesh. Henry Marston made a magnificent Buckingham ; and Hoskins, as a courtier—I forget which of the many who surrounded Charles—had a hearty reception on entering in his usual brisk and jaunty manner, after which he maintained his hold on the audience by a gallant *naïveté* and freedom that either suited his part or compelled his part to suit him, one could hardly say which. The unhistorical characters were John Savile and his family, who brought domestic interest to the play, and were, of course, worked in as foils to the brilliant villany of Buckingham and his associates. John Savile was a typical country gentleman of his time, with a beautiful daughter ; and these two were played to perfection by Phelps and Miss Laura Addison. An old aunt of Lilian Savile, prim, tart, and loving withal, found an adequate representative in Mrs. Marston, while Anthony Younge, as one Master Clayton, a neighbour and friend of John Savile, minutely elaborated a wonderful little fancy portrait, which gave life and laughter to a single scene, and then vanished into darkness. For no other end than tragedy, and the purpose of showing Phelps and Miss Addison as a Lear and Cordelia of common life, Lilian poisons herself at the wrong time—there could not be a right time—and hurries the play to a dismal, as well as lame and impotent conclusion. She is supposed to be a captive, in vile hands ; but the death of Buckingham had freed her, when her father, having hastened to her rescue, finds her dying. The worst of it is that he, calling to mind the story of Virginius, had played the Roman father, and counselled her by letter to the act of self-destruction. All this had to be altered in subsequent representations ; but no meddling could mend a work which, though completed in error, had still been completed.

Phelps's second production of "Macbeth" marked an era in his management. Little recognised as was the truth at the time, he made it impossible for the play to be acted after his day with the old manner of dressing. Yet, when Charles Kean followed a few years afterwards with "Macbeth" at the Princess's, a convenient fit of oblivion seized the town, and Kean was accredited with much erudite originality, even Planché joining in the general chorus. About the same time that Phelps's true Shakespearean

revival was in full career, the Oxford Street house, under the penurious management of Mr. Maddox, was starring successfully with Macready and Miss Cushman, the run of well-known plays including "Macbeth" on the old sophisticated lines. This, of course, was before Charles Kean's brilliant reign at that theatre. I am not sure that the dingy, save-all system cynically persisted in by Mr. Maddox came much cheaper than the fit but few embellishments with which Phelps contrived to invest "Macbeth" with a rugged reality on his little stage. Intelligence sufficed, at comparatively little cost, to illustrate the play more effectively than could have been done by a sixfold expenditure without judgment. This, I have always insisted, was one of the great secrets of Phelps's success at Islington. Nothing simpler, nothing more sudden and surprising than the vanishing of the three witches, at the beginning of the first scene, can be imagined; nor did I ever see better witches, even when Drinkwater Meadows has been one of them. They were, at Sadler's Wells, Younge, Scharf, and Wilkins. Younge, in the third scene—the heath during a thunder storm—conveyed a grotesque intensity of malice into his face and voice that I remember quite vividly at the present time. A fault, the only mechanical error of stage-management, was the method of producing the thunder, which was brought too prominently into the front, and seemed to come from the ceiling, as if a game of skittles were being played upon the roof. Phelps was Macbeth; Bennett, Banquo; Marston, Macduff; Johnson, Malcolm; Hoskins, Rosse; Graham, Lennox; and Laura Addison, Lady Macbeth, a rather conventional performance, in which the actress seemed always to be "doing her best." In addition to these, were characters not usually seen on the stage—never, I believe, in our time, except during that season at Sadler's Wells, and then only for about half the number of representations. In pursuance of a strict determination to play "Macbeth" as nearly as possible as it was written, Phelps gave the scene in Macduff's castle ending with the slaughter of the Thane's innocent wife and babes. The pretty dialogue was delivered with a lively pathos by Miss Cooper and the clever child who played Macduff's little son, and whom I remember as Mamilius in "The Winter's Tale" and as Prince Arthur in "King John."

It was necessary that some of the smaller parts should be doubled, and notably the Porter found a grotesque representative

in Mr. Scharf, who, from playing one of the witches, made himself unrecognisable by covering his face with volcanic blains and blotches, and admirably fulfilled the dramatic purpose of that scene which gave De Quincy matter for his brilliant metaphysical essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in 'Macbeth.'" In the awakening of the castle on the alarm of Macduff, in the thundering tramp tramp that gathered along the galleries, in the lurid smoke and flame of the torches, in the thick-coming throng of chiefs, soldiers, clansmen, warders, retainers, vassals, attendants, I have heard old actors pay a warm tribute to the excellent stage-managing by which a scene of sudden terror was thus brought into vivid prominence and reality. Yet I do not suppose the Sadler's Wells treasury bled more in consequence of the pains taken to ensure an impressive and natural spectacle. If ever this play were seen as it might have been "produced under the superintendence of the author," it was in the year 1847, at Sadler's Wells. No stage direction—no, not one—was disregarded on that First Night, whatever might have happened afterwards; and "Macbeth's head on a pole" was borne aloft by the victorious Macduff, on his re-entrance after the deciding conflict with the baffled tyrant. To have seen that play, as put upon the stage by Phelps, was, for every common and illiterate spectator, to have *read* it; and I do not hesitate, therefore, to affirm that the spread of dramatic poetry during the years of that earnest actor's work of theatrical management was of itself an educational force.

I recollect that when Charles Kean followed suit with this play, "in Lowland costume," his banquet scene, far more elaborate, had for me nothing like the rough charm of reality attained by the simple, but by no means inefficient, contrivances in the Sadler's Wells representation. On both occasions it is within my memory that the much-vexed question, "Ought the ghost of Banquo to appear in sight of the audience?" was duly served up in newspaper print. Knowing, as we all know, what has been said, both originally and at second hand, to prove that ghosts, Shakespearean and other, should be invisible, don't let us tread that long weary lane of argument for the thousand and first time: sufficient be the knowledge that Hamlet alone sees his father's spirit, while engaged in wringing the heart of the Queen, her husband's brother's wife; that Macbeth alone sees the wraith of the man he has murdered. Grant this, but we still have the stage-

direction, which surely goes for something; and, more than that, we have, in the case of Hamlet's father's ghost, spoken words as well; so that, if a ghost of any consistent character, he must be not only invisible, but inaudible by the same rule. At the Princess's, Charles Kean introduced illusions, more or less visionary and phantomlike; still, the ghost was there, his substantial personality being only a question of degree; and the knot was neither untied nor cut asunder. At Sadler's Wells, there was no such lame compromise between George Bennett, in the flesh, and a magic lantern. He rose bodily from the castle-floor and usurped the vacant seat of the usurper, at whom he shook his gory locks with slow accusing dignity. Let me confess that I liked this straightforward solid way of managing matters, that I infinitely preferred it to any super-subtle suggestiveness, such as would have juggled us out of the ghost we were all looking for, Banquo's to wit, substituting Pepper's as a very questionable improvement.

There must have been what we should now call "a strong Conservative element" in the gallery of Sadler's Wells when "*Coriolanus*" was played for the first time on that honestly vulgar stage. All the sympathy was with the Roman General and patrician friends, while the "bald tribunes" and the wavering populace were heartily contemned. The chief character was one of those in which Phelps showed himself the worthy successor of Macready. For my own part, admirer of Macready though I was, it cost me no pains to forget him while Phelps as the noble Roman trod the stage. It was a fine, a stirring performance, that carried the whole house with it. No less as manager than as actor—but this was customary praise—did Phelps deserve the thanks of all the Shakespearean playgoers for his faithful reproduction of what Dr. Johnson calls the "most amusing of our author's plays." There was less abbreviation, less absorption, omission, joining, and transposition of scenes than must inevitably occur in these days of elaborate sets. Indeed, I do not remember that there was anything of the kind except a reduction of the first act by omitting the Volscian episodes. In few other plays is there so much bustle and action, so frequent a change of scene, so utter an indifference to unity, in the sudden leaps from place to place. There are no fewer than nine scenes in the first act, three in the second, as many in the third, seven in the fourth, and five in the fifth—twenty-seven scenes in all, an impracticable number, except on olden conditions of a perpetual appeal

to the imagination of the audience, which, after all, may have been no bad training of the popular mind in the attentive earnestness of its amusements.

The principal actor's happiest moments were, of course, his canvass of the people's votes, standing before them in "the hapless vesture of humility"; his angry and scornful opposition to the two Tribunes, Sicinius and Brutus; and his passionate outcry of the rabble, who are hounding him to banishment, just after they have unanimously voted him Consul, "You common cry of curs," with the magnificent defiance—

I banish you ;
 And here remain with your uncertainty !
 Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
 Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
 Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
 To banish your defenders : till, at length,
 Your ignorance (which finds not till it feels)
 Making not reservation of yourselves
 (Still your own foes) deliver you, as most
 Abated captives, to some nation
 That won you without blows !

The fierce sarcasm of this harangue, mounting, syllable by syllable, to a taunt which, even for the most ignoble order of humanity, would have a bitter sting, suited the passionate declamation of Phelps better than anything else in the part, till the last scene, in which again he lashes himself into the mood of taunting invective, and tells the Volsces, "if they have writ their annals true"—a superbly insulting hypothesis!—"they will have placed on record the occasion when he alone fluttered them 'like an eagle in a dovecote.'" A fine action of Phelps's accompanied his utterance of the word "fluttered," which came after a seemingly enforced pause, and with that lifted emphasis and natural break in his voice, remembered, I daresay, by all who admired him in his prime. Lifting his arm to its full outstretched height above his head, he shook his hand to and fro, as in the act of startling a flock of doves. Henry Marston made a noble Aufidius; and George Bennett was sufficiently dignified and soldierlike as the Patrician General, Cominius. A humour that never outran discretion flavoured the satirical speeches of Menenius Agrippa, as impersonated by that admirably quaint and original actor, Anthony Younge, who, at the present day, would be drawing a salary at least sixfold the amount of what was likely to have been his pay at Sadler's

Wells. The last I heard of Younge was from Phelps, in the course of a kindly visit which the great actor paid me a year or so before his death. He then told me Younge was dead, having, for the last few years of his life, taken to vegetarianism and water drinking. "Towards the end," said Phelps, "I met him, wheeled in a chair, the merest shadow of his own old self." With him went from the world's stage a truly fine, though imperfectly recognised, actor. Mr. Mellon played one of the two Tribunes, and there was a man in the mob who distinguished himself by a proletarian zeal which gained him a round of laughter and applause. Miss Glyn, afterwards to make her greatest impression as Cleopatra, was the Volumnia of "Coriolanus." Miss Cooper played Virgilia, one of her best-fitting characters; and the good-natured, gossiping Lady Valeria fell to the excellent keeping of Mrs. Marston.

Inasmuch as Miss Glyn followed Miss Laura Addison at Sadler's Wells, I must be taking a backward step in time when I speak of "The Tempest," one of the Phelpsian revivals which, after the memorable First Night, took me again and again to the front row either of the pit, or of the first circle. There were no stalls, remember, and when I was in good time and could find room, I preferred the pit. I will own my frequent visits were in a great measure due to the charming Ariel of Miss Julia St. George, who sang "Where the bee sucks" in a style the mere recollection of which drives me mad with impatient irritation whenever it is now sung in my hearing by anyone else, though I have heard it, long ago, deliciously sung by Miss Priscilla Horton, now Mrs. German Reed. It was Miss Laura Addison who played Miranda, Phelps, of course, being the Prospero, and shining greatly in the poetical and declamatory lines of the part. "The cloud-capp'd towers," the solemn good-bye to his magic in the speech, "Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves," and the most exquisite and dainty of all epilogues, "Now my charms are all o'erthrown," must ever be associated, by me at least, with the accents of one man, for I never happened to see Macready in the part, and I could not grasp success when I tried hard to like Charles Kean. Ferdinand was played by Henry Marston, who had begun to look too old for the part, though he bore himself gallantly, and was youthful enough in figure, if not in face or voice. George Bennett was the best Caliban that ever talked like a poet and crawled like a beast. No one who knows the play can have failed to observe that the finest imagery

is put into the mouth of the monster, whose lines of blank verse run through the gross, earthy, and mephitic prose of his drunken companions, Stephano and Trinculo, like threads of gold. These last-named worthies were as amusing in their fatuous plottings as two such actors as Younge and Scharf could make them. I have already spoken of Miss St. George as Ariel. I have heard from Phelps that she took much coaching to make her perfect in the part; but she certainly did the coaching justice, and *was* perfect. The fiery speech, "You are three men of sin," was a piece of declamation worthy the actor of Prospero himself. The lady had a way of dropping off a little towards the end of her speeches, but she was always distinctly audible, and any manner she betrayed was sure to be pleasing, though in another it might have seemed a fault. I have spoken of the "doubling" at Sadler's Wells, as inevitable with so small a company. In the mask of spirits which Prospero sets before the lovers, Ferdinand and Miranda, the part of Juno was assumed by Miss St. George, who, as Ariel, might, indeed, be a supposed performer in the vision.



Art behind the Curtain.

II.

A Pleasing Expression.

AS a subject for a picture of the "fancy" kind, Sybil Newstead was all my fancy, assisted by my fingers, could possibly paint her; being undoubtedly a very beautiful specimen of her sex, with a dazzling complexion of a peculiarly healthy hue, and a figure which was alike womanly and graceful. As a sitter for the plain, straightforward portrait which it was my duty to amend, she left a good deal to be desired, and a good deal more to the imagination.

Her fond parent had warned me of the difficulties of portrayal which the lady's bashful behaviour might give rise to. And no wonder; for a head persistently posed in profile cannot well be depicted in a front view; eyes that are constantly downcast can hardly be represented wide open, while Reynolds himself might have found a difficulty in delineating a smile when the face before him was wholly devoid of animation.

Compared with nature, the likeness was not so hopelessly inaccurate as to be beyond rectification. A few touches here and a few touches there might, as my employer expressed it, "make all the difference." The proportions were correct, the features were in their right places. There was the same slightly retroussé nose; the same daintily-defined mouth; the same well-rounded chin and cheek. Even the semi-décolleté dress of pale blue silk, with trimmings of cream-coloured tulle, had been adequately "done to pattern." Still there was something wanting. It might be in the nose, it might be in the mouth, it might be in the eyes—in the chin—the upper-lip—the forehead. There could be no question, however, that the thing of paint did not do justice to the thing of flesh and blood: that it was not half good-looking enough for the living original, and, above all, that the expression was not a pleasing one.

But if something was wanting in the work of art, something was also wanting in the human work ; in order therefore to amend the one it was absolutely necessary to improve the other. With this in view, I had endeavoured to get the sitter to converse upon such subjects as might, by awakening her interest, render her forgetful for the time of the terrors of the situation. But, whether the topics touched upon were uncongenial, or too commonplace, the lady was disinclined to talk, and when required to open her lips in answer to any question directly put, she merely replied by a gesture of the head or by inarticulate monosyllables.

The bolder lady, who acted as chaperon during the sitting, and appeared to be the ruling spirit of the Newstead household, was not more successful in her own attempts to divert the sitter and render her submissive to my wants, though for this purpose she often assumed an authoritative tone as an elder person might do with a younger one, or as a governess with a pupil. Miss Mackester was, however, only occasionally present, as her numerous duties—whatever they consisted of—sometimes required her services elsewhere. I was, therefore, not unfrequently left to the tender mercies of the sitter and to my own scanty resources ; a circumstance that was not altogether to be regretted, as somehow Miss Newstead was more manageable in the chaperon's absence than was the case when that formidable lady was present.

With a much younger sitter the situation might perhaps have been less embarrassing. Children of a certain age are, with few exceptions, not difficult to deal with. You can bribe them by buns and encourage them by caresses. You may tempt them with toys and threaten them with impossible punishments. Even babies in arms have been known to assume the required attitude, and to look in the required direction by the employment of strange sounds, by the magic of tuneful melody, or by acrobatic antics calculated to charm the savage infant breast. But Sybil Newstead was much too advanced in years for seductive sweets and cakes, while, as for the antics and caresses, these could scarcely be attempted, even for professional reasons, without offending her maiden modesty and sense of decorum.

Now, although an assistant's social dealings with a sitter had certain business restrictions prescribed by Mr. Robbin, he was at perfect liberty to use every art common to the studio, or out of the studio, that might be indirectly conducive to a picture's progress.

Thus I was free not only to converse with my sitter upon every topic not likely to affect my employer's interests and reputation as a photographer, but I might also sing and recite before her, stand on my head, or act in any other way that would assist my pictorial labours. If I had hitherto neglected to avail myself of these privileges, it was because the majority of them were ill-suited to circumstances, as also because I had not yet discovered the weak point of my sitter. That weak point was, however, presently revealed in a manner that I shall endeavour now to describe. It began by a conversation with the chaperon, in the course of which that enlightened person happened to remark, as she gazed during an interval of rest at my incomplete handiwork, "I dare say you find my sister rather difficult," meaning that she was difficult as a subject to treat. The expression, though commonplace enough, was not easy to answer, as her sister was not only difficult to paint but difficult to please. For obvious reasons, however, I refrained from offering any such observation, and merely replied in conventional language that a lady—meaning, of course, her likeness—was not as easy to "catch" as a gentleman or a person with strongly-marked features.

"It may be for this reason," I went on, gladly availing myself of a new topic which might interest the sitter, "that as a general rule artists, even of the highest standing in their profession, succeed better with male than with female subjects."

"And yet," said the only female who ever spoke in that improvised atelier, "our annual exhibitions are always over-stocked by portraits of children in every conceivable attitude and under every conceivable circumstance. Surely children must be especially difficult to deal with; for besides the perplexities of portrayal, their restless habits have also to be studied, or otherwise allowed for."

"Very young children are often a source of endless trouble and annoyance to an artist," I answered somewhat absently. Then it suddenly occurred to me to relate, in connection with this subject, a little anecdote or story of the studio, which, referring as it did to the insubordinate behaviour of a refractory child whom it was once my misfortune to depict, would point a moral that might act with salutary effects upon the mind of my grown-up sitter. So after another dab or two at the imperfect performance, and

another glance or two at the living original, whose features were, if anything, more foreshortened than was usual, I said in continuation of my last remark:—

“I remember once painting a little girl of five who could not be persuaded, either by myself or by her nurse, to sit quite still for two consecutive moments. We had stuffed her with sweets and dosed her with dolls; we had presented her with coloured picture-books and encouraged her by tempting promises. But the sweets were quickly consumed and her thirst for such dainties long since satisfied; the dolls and coloured picture-books lost, in turn, their charm of novelty, while the promises—like the toys to which they referred—were made to be broken. Then I thought of the strong measures sometimes adopted for restless sitters of tender years, and after reminding the little maid for the ninety-ninth time that her head still rested on an arm of the chair she was seated upon, while her pale blue stockings similarly dangled from the opposite arm, I said solemnly,

“‘If you continue to sit like that, Miss Maud, I will put you like that in the picture; and then!’—here I assumed a graver tone—‘what will mamma say?’ Quite equal to the occasion, and without in the least altering her recumbent attitude, the child promptly replied,

“‘Mamma wouldn’t have such a picture!’ The reasoning was conclusive, but irritating. So irritating that, in a moment of ill-concealed anger, I presently remarked, in a manner calculated to fill the bravest breast with terror and dismay,

“‘I’ll tell you what, Miss Maud!—I’ll tell you what. If you don’t keep still and do as I bid you, I’ll make the most horrible faces ever seen by human eyes!’

“The dreadful threat was so far successful in its effects as to cause the intended victim to turn for a moment in my direction, while a look of childish wonder, not unmingled with expectant interest, was displayed in every feature. The glance and gesture were, however, but of momentary duration, and finding after another peep or two that the countenance before her showed as yet no visible sign of its facial contortions, she thought it time to remind me of my promise, and with the disappointed air of a person who goes to see a pantomime and remains to witness a transpontine tragedy in blank verse, she exclaimed,

“‘You said, if I didn’t keep still and do as you told me, that you’d make horrible faces. Now I am not keeping still (suiting the action to the word) and you—you are not keeping your promise. And so, Mr. Artist,’ she concluded with terrible emphasis, ‘you are a wicked story-teller!’

“‘It was clear from this,” I added by way of appendix to the anecdote, “that the promised punishment was regarded as an agreeable reward. The most horrible faces ever seen by human eyes was, from that child’s particular point of view, a novel experience—a delightful sensation—which, if not altogether unknown to the nursery, was assuredly not peculiar to the parlour. An artist who made faces on canvas was nothing new; examples of the kind being afforded by pictures in which the human countenance divine is more or less caricatured; but an artist who distorted his own features was not a thing of everyday occurrence, and to a person satiated with the pleasures of the playground, it was a phenomenon well worth investigation.”

I had scarcely repeated the words just quoted, when the face of my present sitter, upon which there had lately appeared a ripple of suppressed merriment (which I took professional note of), now broke into a bright and happy smile. I caught that smile and the dimples that the smile developed, and I endeavoured to transfer both to the picture. Alas! the smile was but of brief duration; for even as I congratulated myself upon my easily-won victory, the features before me flickered, and by slow degrees grew dim, till, like the lowering of stage-lamps for the storm at sea, the bright and happy look was changed to one of gravity and gloom. A little lime-light was, however, presently turned on.

A wicked story-teller! The expression was not a pleasing one, conveying, as it did, a doubt concerning my veracity, but upon the principle that there is good in everything, I swallowed the obnoxious epithet, and meanwhile it suggested a plan of procedure which was immediately put into execution. That same plan I proposed to adopt on behalf of the bashful sitter, with the hope that it might be as beneficial in its effects as in the case of the precocious one.

“Are you fond of *pretty* stories?” I had said in answer to the wicked words the irrepressible Maud had just repeated.

"Do you mean fairy tales?" was after due deliberation that child's interrogatory response.

"Yes, fairy tales, if you like," promptly I returned. "Shall I tell you one?"

"If you know any that I haven't heard before," was her cautious answer. The reply was disappointing, showing, as it did, too great a familiarity with the subject; so my repertoire in Nursery legend being limited, not to say stale, I asked after some reflection,

"Did you ever hear a true tale?—a story of something that actually happened—of people who really lived?"

"No, not that kind of story," was her welcome reply, "Do you know one, Mr. Artist?"

"Yes, I do know one," I answered freely, "and I will tell you one this very instant, if you promise to keep quite still and put on your pleasantest smile."

"Is it a funny story, then?" was her not unnatural inquiry.

"Funny!" I repeated with something like a groan, as I thought of the painful circumstances of my past; "not very."

"Is it a ghost story, then, and very dreadful?" Here she sat bolt upright in her chair, and prepared to listen with all her little ears.

"It is not a ghost story," I answered regretfully; "I only wish it were. And it is not very dreadful either."

"Then why are you so serious?" was her next most natural demand.

"I have reason to be serious," I returned with a sigh which did not escape my observant listener, "as the unpleasant incidents of my story refer to myself."

"To yourself!!" she exclaimed, with childish ecstasy and clapping of hands, "Oh, do begin, please."

This was scarcely complimentary, evincing as it did too great an eagerness to hear of my misfortunes. However, as my main purpose was to evoke a pleasing expression on the sitter's face, it might be as well if the account of my boyish experiences as an artist should awaken her sense of humour rather than arouse her sympathies. I, therefore, proceeded to relate a well-remembered episode of my early history, and this was so far approved of as to cause the little maid to become, for the time



"Come into Court."

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

MR. ARTHUR CECIL.

being, as pacific and tractable as any lay figure, though with more animation in her features than is usually displayed by the mask of a mannikin.

The story in question I now retailed, with a few variations, for the delectation of Sybil Newstead ; but I had scarcely begun when, with the conviction that her services in the cause of art might for the present be dispensed with, or from some other motive, the chaperon withdrew from the apartment.

I was not sorry for Miss Mackester's disappearance, as the story I proposed to repeat seemed better suited to the intelligence of an indulgent and taciturn audience than to a critical and talkative one. So, without further consideration, I proceeded to describe as briefly as possible the particulars of my first pictorial appearance in public, and by way, of introduction, I explained that my father, who was a well-to-do merchant in the heart of London, had always entertained a strange prejudice against professions in general and art in particular, and that he had often said: "No son of mine shall be brought up to a beggarly profession and starve"; varying the sentiment by occasionally declaring that he would rather see a son of his a chimney-sweep or a crossing-sweeper than a brother of the fine-art brush.

I also made some reference to my mother and her relatives, the Cranbranes, who were all professionally engaged, and if their respective professions did not yield much pecuniary profit, still it gave them a certain position or standing in society which, to the Cranbrane way of thinking, was everything. I likewise mentioned how desirous my mother and uncles were that the eldest son of David Stone (as my father was called) should be educated as a painter, for which he showed some inclination, and how they had one and all vainly endeavoured to convince my obdurate parent that, with the talents I was said to possess, combined by the splendid opportunities for developing those talents which the prosperous merchant could so well afford, my chances of success would be far greater than might otherwise be the case were I forced by circumstances to earn a living before I was sufficiently versed in the groundwork and principles of art.

Continuing my family history, I stated how, in spite of the Cranbrane plans and proposals concerning their nephew, I found myself before completing my fourteenth year and general education—in

which I was hopelessly backward—upon a high stool in Messrs. David Stone and Son's counting house; how office duties were little relished by myself, as it seemed like going to school again; and how, as with a person wedded to a wealthy but uncongenial lady, I was doomed to a lifetime of commercial infelicity without a prospect of anything like divorce. A divorce was, nevertheless, brought about sooner than was expected, and in a manner that I now proceeded to relate for the benefit of my attentive hearer.

To commemorate my sixteenth birthday, the Cranbranes had presented me with various tokens, each of which was highly characteristic of the donor. Thus, Uncle Herbert Leicester, an architect and civil engineer who "wrote for the papers," contributed a case of mathematical instruments and a T square; Uncle J. P. Stansfield, an author, who also wrote for the papers, similarly bestowed a well-fitted writing-desk adapted for travelling purposes; while from Uncle Felix Hamilton, an advocate and contributor to periodical literature, I received a neatly bound manual of the Elements of Jurisprudence; and from Uncle Wilson Williams, a sculptor, an art critic and lecturer on art, a large box of assorted coloured crayons.

Now, dry chalks had ever been associated in my youthful mind with certain drawings on the pavement which I had often stopped to look at in the public thoroughfares, and while gazing at these open air devices, I sometimes recalled what my father had repeated with regard to obscure beginnings in connection with prosperous endings. Many a successful merchant or manufacturer had, to his own certain knowledge, "sprung from the gutter," as the phrase goes, and, by dint of great diligence and much personal discomfort, he had risen to opulence and eminence. The spring in question was accomplished, he said, in various ways—selling penknives on the kerbstone being one of them—but the favourite method was to sweep out a shop with only half-a-crown in the sweeper's pocket, and so impressed was I by this tradition that I quite believed accumulative riches might be acquired by any person who should begin life by sweeping out a shop with exactly two shillings and sixpence in ready cash as a starting capital.

While contemplating with interest and admiration the artist of the pavement, it occurred to me that he, too, might belong to the

privileged few destined to spring from the gutter ; the pavement being, for every reason, the nearest approach to that enviable condition ; and it was doubtless this reflection, assisted by the coloured crayons in my possession, which persuaded me one day to try my unpractised hand at paving-stone art.

By way of preliminary to the experiment, I made a few important changes in my toilette, as it seemed altogether out of harmony with tradition that my *début* should be effected in brand-new habiliments and with a perfectly clean face. I found no difficulty, however, in acquiring a suitable “make-up,” and in this I was greatly assisted by a beggar-boy of my own age and lawless propensities, who was easily persuaded to exchange his ragged coat and cap for my more respectable clothes of the same denomination. Thus disguised, and with face, hands, and trousers well besmeared by such tints from the colour-box as were best adapted for the simulation of dirt and indigence, I selected an eligible plot of smooth pavement in a well-frequented thoroughfare, and, with my brightest colours, began to embellish it by certain popular designs which I had seen. Conspicuous among these was a section of fresh cut bacon and a similar slice of salmon, together with a realistic red herring, a moonlit landscape, and a storm at sea. Then, the devices being complete, I appended to them in bold white capitals the following imposing inscription :—

DRAWN WITH COMMON DRY CHALKS.

STARVING !

I paused at this part of my story to request my sitter in gentlest tones to raise her eyes a trifle higher, and turn her head more in my direction. I had often made the same request without avail, but at this last time of asking, the lady responded with a willingness and an exactitude which, in the whole course of that tedious sitting, she had never once exhibited ; while, as the act of daring was performed, she spoke—yes, actually spoke !—and, with that look of “amiable sweetness” which I had heard of and not till now beheld, she said in soft, clear accents :—

“Is that as you wish it, Mr. Stone ?”

Those were all the words that emanated from the shy one’s lips, but they were music in my ear, being enough—and more than enough—to convince me that the plan for her reformation had already taken effect. Yes, the account of my boyish experiences

had so far interested its lenient listener as to render her for the moment forgetful of the trying ordeal, while the mention of my family title plainly showed that she remembered some of the circumstances of that hapless history. My rightful name was, moreover, seldom pronounced by any of my employer's connection, as I was usually referred to as "the artist," or as "Mr. Robbin's assistant." Its repetition by the shy stranger was, therefore, gratifying to my feelings as a limner, and a compliment to my abilities as an entertainer. Would this show of interest and friendliness continue to the end—to the happy end, perhaps if my endeavours to paint and to please should be eventually rewarded? It was more than doubtful; but to make doubly sure of this, I would continue the story of my starving experiences to its end—to its bitter end!

Resuming, then, the thread of my narrative at the exact point where it left off, I proceeded to explain that the inscription on the pavement was not as true to nature as the devices were; first, because I had only just partaken of a hearty meal, and secondly, because the chalks I had used were far from as common as they were represented to be. My father, who was a judge of what he called "fancy articles," said they must have cost "a good bit o' money, even at wholesale price"; it was therefore, obvious that the continual employment of such extravagant materials would soon cause my expenses to exceed my gains. For the present, however, all was clear profit, inasmuch as the "common dry chalks" had cost me nothing.

Having completed the designs and their lettered accompaniments, I sat beside them in the forlorn and dejected attitude peculiar to artists of the pavement—the borrowed cap well covering my eyes, and the collar of the ragged coat buttoned high over my clean linen—and in this pitiable condition I waited for public patronage.

The first person to encourage starving art was the well-clad beggar-boy whom I had pressed into the service and furnished with coppers, which he threw in passing my post as an inducement, or bait, for others to follow his generous example. But the connoisseur did not happen to come that way.

Presently an elderly gentleman—judging from his boots and trousers, which were alone visible to my shaded eyes—halted with some members of the free-list who were then inspecting the

show gratuitously, and after a hurried look at the fresh-cut bacon, the slice of salmon, the red herring and moonlit landscape, and a more protracted stare at the storm at sea, fixed his gaze upon the open colour box as it stood in close and ominous proximity with the last-mentioned device. Then, as if communing within himself, he presently remarked,

"These are rather expensive chalks and must have cost a good bit of money even at wholesale price." As the observation was not addressed to me, I answered nothing; but with the conviction that the voice—not to say the sentiment—was not unfamiliar, I pulled the borrowed cap more than ever over my face, and buried my chin in the upturned collar of the coat I was wearing. As I did so, the same speaker asked where I had obtained the box of coloured crayons from.

"I suppose you didn't buy it?" said he in a tone which filled me with alarm. "Come, sir!" he continued somewhat sharply, "why don't you answer? Or are you deaf and dumb as well as starving?"

"N—no!" was my trembling reply, but not with cold and hunger.

"Then answer my question," he went on in a voice that sent the colour to my chalky cheeks: "where did you get this expensive box of crayons from?"

"It was gi'—given to me!" was my stammering, yet truthful response.

"This must be looked into," he remarked after a closer examination of the box's contents. "The fellow (meaning me) may have stolen the goods, and in that case we should only be performing an act of public duty if we handed him over to the police."

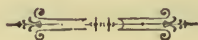
Had any doubt previously existed in my mind concerning the identity of the speaker, that doubt was now completely dispelled, as I was quite convinced he was my own father. So, as I knew that my parent was always a stickler about acts of duty and justice, I thought it advisable to make a clean breast—figuratively speaking—of the whole business, and this I did by presenting my grimy face for his immediate recognition, while with a voice muffled with suppressed emotion, I said,

Forgive me, father! It is your son—Rowland."

The merchant was for the moment speechless with astonishment, and those of the crowd who were within hearing drew back with amazed looks.

"Come, sir!" remarked my parent, when he had sufficiently recovered his composure, "follow me;" and with this Shakespearean, but terribly significant language, he laid hands upon the upturned collar of the borrowed coat and assisted his son to spring from the gutter with a precipitation never contemplated by that hopeful votary, and in a manner wholly without precedent in the annals of rising genius. Meanwhile the beggar-boy had disappeared, quite forgetful that the upper—and better—half of the clothes he was wearing belonged to me.

At this stage of the story—of which more remained to be told—I paused once again, to request my sitter, with less diffidence than before, that she would not laugh quite so much while I put a few touches to the lips and eyes. This time the lady responded with some difficulty, as it was not easy to assume, at a moment's notice, a sufficiently serious look. So I waited till her features were more composed, when the touches in question were applied, and with them the finishing touches to my now completed performance.



Felo-de-se !

BY ÆTHELING.

“MY morning star is fading over the hill waiting for the dawn of the golden sun which draweth nigh !”

The words were wandering drowsily and disconnectedly through my mind, tired with the weariness of a restless night—my last night upon earth—for I knew the sands were nearly run ; the fatal hour, to which I had looked forward with horror unspeakable all my life, was fast approaching, and I lay alternating in a cold sweat of agony and an indifference wholly incomprehensible to me.

My dainty, girlish bedroom, with its flowery cretonne, cool, green porcelain and lacey curtains, looked to the south-east over the broad waters of the bay. Through the open window I could hear the little waves laughing loudly upon the shore, the glorious notes of the winged songsters singing their lovely “Hymn of Praise”; aye, even the wings of my favourite sea-gulls, flapping as they dipped into the water, sparkling with a greeting to the springtide sun shining overhead. And these mocking words kept taunting me ; words long forgotten, but not to be banished now.

I had done an awful thing, and I was to bear the full and awful penalty. Worn out with longing and sorrow over an unfortunate and unrequited love affair, I had resolved last night to put myself so soundly to sleep that no dreams, waking or sleeping, should ever trouble me again, and I had taken a sedative strong enough to accomplish my purpose. With “la mort dans l’âme,” why not the body dead too !

But strange to say, the night was unquiet, restless, wearily unending. Did oblivion refuse after all to come at my call ? Was I never to leave off feeling and suffering ? Lying on my bed, unable to give one sign of the consuming fire within me, I had heard people come to my room, break open the door, speak of the stifling atmosphere, slightly raise the window, then—my mother—find the empty phial. “Mother, mother, help me, O help me !” I cried in bitter despair. But the words were like

molten lead in my burning brain ; no effort, though I struggled with the strength of torture, sufficed to bring them over my parched lips. I had heard the doctor's arrival, and his verdict that all would be over before four and twenty hours ; and so my last night passed away, in which I slumbered not, nor slept.

In the morning, after a short period of drowsiness and wandering, I grew quieter, and, with the full perception of the approaching drop of the curtain on the drama of my life, came Memory, like a shadowy sister of the veil, pointing with grisly finger at picture after picture of the past. Recollection became intensely vivid, asserting a startling sway over her prostrate victim, and it seemed to me as if the long agony of death, which would only end in the evening, was already commencing. Scene after scene, of childhood, girlhood, and early womanhood, arose, impressed itself upon the retina of my burning eye-balls and vanished ; each one giving place to another where evil was growing in greater proportion to good.

There was the first purloined sweetmeat from the mother's bonbonnière, and though, when reproved, the childish face looked sad and sorrowful, I saw the guardian angel veil its face, saying mournfully : " Only the *suffering*, not the *sin* is repented." The first lie—a false report, never discovered, but eating like a worm into my heart for many a day. Life in pension, where underhand deeds and unmaidenly conversation awakened aims and desires beyond my years. Here were the first signs of the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life, the hypocrisy of unreal sentiment and piety. Who can tell what I had been, had I never been to boarding-school ? Perhaps less outwardly pious, but assuredly more pure within.

And from school life onwards the pictures grew more rapidly dark, for the seeds sown there sprang quickly into blossom, bearing fruit, glittering and bright to the eye, but bitter as gall to the eager palate.

The most trifling things of my existence recurred to me ; dreams which had seemed like warnings ; sermons, to which I had listened languidly and unwillingly, came to my mind word for word as I had heard them.

I remembered a certain lonely, wintry walk, when I battled with myself and my pride, and determined never, never to give up my will. A proud glance, a half-sneer from the man I loved in

madness—and folly (for he was already bound)—had set my blood boiling with anger, sorrow, revenge, longing; and my only resource at such times was ever to slip away by myself in the twilight, to walk as if for life or death; if in howling wind, pouring rain, or whirling snowstorm, so much the better; the body struggling with the elements gave the mind time to calm itself. But that walk was on a day which might have suggested a scene for Dante's *Inferno*. The commonplace, dreary road was barren of all signs of life, save for myself, and the dust, whirling before the biting wind, flew stinging in my face. Morally and physically I felt deprived of courage, driven to despair. The bare, black trees loomed gaunt and ghost-like in the gathering gloom against a dead sky of cold, grey snow clouds, stretching out their weird, skeleton arms, as if in search of prey. The water, fast freezing beneath the iron hand of winter, trickled with a weary moan which made me close my ears and hasten my steps to forget it. And I thought, as I hurried on, that the next life, if there *were* one, might condemn me to an existence in some such circumstances as a punishment for my sins. I could imagine nothing more frightful, in my passion, than this semi-frozen inanition. But why should I fear? Had not I, the doubter, looked with unutterable scorn upon the devotees in the great cathedral, beating their breasts and crying, "Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault?" Life *must* be a dream, and death, eternal sleep.

I recollected a picture I had seen by Gabriel Max, which had exerted an almost magical influence upon me. I had stood enthralled before it, compelled by an irresistible impulse ever to return to its study. It was the Astarte of Byron's "*Manfred*." She is returning, at her brother's conjuration, from the star to which she has been banished after death. The figure is painted in a slanting position, which gives the impression that it is hovering in the air, upon a background of cold, grey-green, on which gleams, with white ray, devoid of lustre, the star from which Astarte has been called. The eyes are dark and heavy, expressing plainly the weary awaking; in them one reads remorse, but not repentance, and love yearning and unspeakable; love stronger than many waters, conquering death and the grave, constraining her sorrowfully to return at the call of her guilty lover. The mouth is cold and dead; the hands are folded lightly, as they only are in the last, long sleep. Looking at the Astarte, I shuddered

for my own fate. I knew if he whom I loved so passionately were to tempt me, I, too, should fall, and my face was covered with burning blushes of womanly shame at the longing I could not repress for one word of mercy from the man I worshipped.

But the whole hapless story of my passion is too sacred to be unveiled to the eyes of the world. How could I confess the desolate loneliness, the despair of unsatisfied desire, the contempt I felt at my own weakness, the inexpressible pain of finding myself scorned ! Suffice it to say that the disease grew and increased till all other feelings yielded to the dominion of this one overpowering one, and became subordinate to it ; nay, it seemed as if all feeling concentrated itself in the one that had taken possession of me, and I was that feeling—that feeling was all that existed of me. Heine says of this strongest of feelings :—“ Die Engel nennen es Himmelsfreude, die Teufel nennen es Hollenqual, die Menschen nennen es Liebe ! ”

But *now*. The day began to decline, and Memory had completed her dreary task. All my life had been reviewed, and lying there, powerless to move hand or foot, unable to unclothe an eyelid, the shadow of death laid its icy hand on my heart to warn me of the coming night. I had known that the sinking sun would shine upon the last scene, that the carolling of the birds going to rest would be the requiem of my departing soul, that the swaying of the myriads of blue-bells in the evening breeze would ring the knell for the guilty, shuddering, passing spirit. And though I had known it, I had not lifted my soul to God, I had shrunk from the scorching light of the terrible eye of righteousness, piercing through my soul as a sunbeam pierces the crystal. The sin I had sinned had filled my soul, and it filled it still ; even now I knew no other longing or desire, save the one guilty sensation of my life. It came, the intense agony, the last moment, the light grew dim, shadows drew around me, shutting out the roseate hues of the tinted cloudlets, the horror of death rested chilly upon me, the pulses ceased to beat. But *I* was not dead ; I felt rather new strength to live, and capability to suffer and enjoy. An incomprehensible power, wordless, nameless, bade me arise, and *I, myself*, my *old* self, arose and followed the invisible presence. The mind was freed from matter, the soul quit of the body, and I knew then that *life* is eternal, *love* is eternal. *What* life and love were to be in this new existence, I knew not ; I only felt that all

sensations were quickened a thousandfold, and that if love had been torment on earth, it had become doubly and trebly refined here.

Some *thing*, some *being*, some *power*, I knew not what, moved at my side as we floated onward, surrounded by the cold shadows, a thing I could understand and feel without being able to see, a thing which led my spirit, shrinking and shuddering in its horrible nakedness. As yet, I had neither seen nor heard any being but myself, and a terrible dread came over me as I thought of coming into contact with others of my kind, of exposing my soul, bare of all covering, to the gaze of other spirits. For all my life was written there, legible for whoever cared to read, every idle word, every secret thought. To the last I had cherished my sin, and I loved it still, but, O misery! without hope or power of ever satisfying it now. My *life* had been a guilty love, and was to remain so for ever and for ever.

In speechless, nameless terror I paused at length, was *compelled* to pause, and a voiceless command entered into me to stand and look about me. The thick shadows fled from around and above me, and I stood utterly alone, shivering and naked in the cold, grey twilight. And then a piercing, burning light fell upon me—the eye of God. My presentiment had been too true! A voice, clear and strong, sweeter than music, more sorrowful than death, pronounced the wordless sentence of my fate. I did not *hear* the sounds, they came to me in another and different sense to formerly, but I comprehended them, I felt them like the waves of the sea overwhelming me. And recognising the wonderful sweetness and fulness that lay therein, I knew what I had lost. “We needs must love the highest when we know it,” and I saw and felt the beauty and exquisite harmony of the “Highest,” which had been *too* high for me.

The light faded, the agony slackened, and I looked tremblingly around at the place I was to abide in, thenceforward and for ever. It seemed to be a region of fog and mist, where huge shadows hovered, blotting out the boundaries, where neither foundation nor firmament was visible. In the distance, here and there, gleamed a light with dimmed rays through the heavy atmosphere. A cold, dreary wind swept through the place, leaving no corner unvisited, sweeping everything before it. I drifted along, unable to resist, and, as I grew accustomed to the twilight, I became

aware of other spirits moving beside me with soundless signs of mute, inconceivable misery. I shrank back—in vain; the frosty wind urged me pitilessly forward; I endeavoured to hide my nakedness—impossible; my soul was bare as the other souls about me; as I could read them, so they could read me.

O, unutterable agony!—this consuming love, this wasting fire, neither to be quenched nor satisfied. Was ever torture like to this! O that I had *thought* in my lifetime, that I, fool, had known by intuition that we create our own punishment by fostering our darling sins; that it needs nought else to chastise us with an everlasting chastisement of living death.

We neared one of the lights I had seen in the distance, and each spirit sought more strenuously than before to conceal or cover itself. In vain; the merciless wind wafted one and all before it, and the intense radiance of the eye of God was upon us again, making misery more miserable, laying bare in more awful distinctness the secrets of each shrinking, fearful soul. What hideous histories were there of evil motives for noble deeds; what greed of gain and thirst for revenge and blood; what lust of life and the flesh; what revelations of hypocrisy, dishonour, treachery, cruelty. And in each soul the ruling passion in life was exercising a double force. A galling hunger, never to be stilled, was the damnation of all these wretched beings. A burning passion feeding upon itself, in a place where all was dim, dead, frosty, and full of mist.

I waited wonderingly to see if I recognised any bound to me formally by ties of kindred or friendship. Woe, woe, my brother hovered near in sorrowful silence—a dishonoured career, a shameful death, were written in glowing characters upon his soul; in front of me was a man to whom I had looked up as a pattern of conscientious Christianity, and I saw him now as a dissembler of the blackest dye; and at my side the bosom friend of my girlhood bewailed the child of sin that had cost her earthly life.

And in this deathlike monotony of life, years passed, and centuries faded, as it seemed, for time was not, and each one lived according to his capability of living and feeling. But the anguish was ever the same. Ever the biting wind, the chilly mist, the piercing, stinging light of the eye of God, and the companionship of the increasing band of those tortured spirits. This suffering *must* cease, my agony must find a voice, and I cried aloud for

pardon and relief. And once again I felt rather than heard the tender, strong voice of God enter into me, but this time it came to assuage and not to augment the misery, for I became less and less conscious, and at last a sort of slumber came over me. The wind ceased to shake me with its clammy breath, and as I regained sensation, I felt something like warmth creeping over me. "O God, have pity upon me!" was the cry of my troubled spirit, and it seemed as if I *heard* the words from a human voice. It was my own. I was lying still upon my own little white bed, in my pretty chamber, my mother was kneeling beside me, praying, as I believe only a mother *can* pray, for the life of the child she has borne.

The sedative had *not* been strong enough for its purpose. Has the dream helped me then since to bear my burden in patience, to rise sometimes superior to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and, "In the teeth of clenched antagonisms, to follow up the worthiest?" Those who know me best can tell!



American Actresses.

BY THE COMTESSE ANNA DE BREMONT.

AMERICAN actresses "par excellence" are emotional—emotional in Tragedy, in Comedy, and even in Burlesque. This may seem an anomaly, but when we consider the high state of nervous mental pressure under which the Americans live, it is not strange that the Stage should, like a mirror, reflect the intensity which pervades the most ordinary offices of their daily life.

The surroundings of the American woman have made her peculiarly impressionable. No woman is taught so thoroughly the art of pleasing. She knows well the power of every charm. To fascinate, to beguile, is the Alpha and Omega of her education, and as an actress she spares no opportunity to dazzle by the glamour of her personality; her beauty and the elegance and richness of her gowns are important factors to her success in the eyes of the enterprising manager, and with the public as well, for the Americans have a most chivalrous love for a pretty woman. The recent successes of a well-known English beauty, who challenged criticism as an actress, and disarmed that hydra-headed foe by the mere power of her charms, is an incontestable proof.

Matilda Heron, a woman of immense nervous force, an unpolished diamond of the highest histrionic genius, was the creator of the American school of emotional comedy. Her early career brought her only mediocre success, she saw that her genius was wasted in the old grooves, and she determined to try the unexplored fields of French Comedy. She went to Paris, where for three months, night after night, she studied the great Desclos in her wonderful portrayal of Dumas' heroine. When Miss Heron returned to America, her interpretation of Camille flashed like a meteor across the dramatic firmament, the star of melodrama paled and vanished in the glowing prismatic brilliancy of this new star of emotional comedy. She was a woman of handsome, voluptuous presence, a face sparkling with expression, and, under their straight brows, eyes glowing like the fire in old wine, her voice was sweet and ringing, and capable of the most tender modulations. It is not to be marvelled at, that an actress of such a type should have given an intensely realistic picture of the ill-fated Camille. She humanised in the highest degree her portrayal

of a woman of innate nobility of heart, the victim of an unfortunate birth, bound by the unyielding fetters of circumstances to a course of life, in which she felt a vague discontent, and at the same time a *naïve* enjoyment of its glittering pleasures. The coldest heart could not resist the witchery of that sunny nature, untrammelled by conventionality, revelling, like a flower, in its own sweetness, and finding a wild joy in that new life of love. Miss Heron bore away her audience in a great wave of sympathy, forgotten were the frailties of the heroine in the syren-spell of her beauty and matchless *naïveté*! In the scene with the father of Armand she rose to the sublimest heights of emotional acting; her maddened grief when she beholds the rock of social distinction on which her hopes are wrecked and her lover lost for ever seemed to shake the depths of her soul, and wrung from her audience sobs and tears. The pitiful despair with which she accepts her fate and plunges back into the vortex of the old life, the feverish courting of death, and the rapture at its approaching release were acted with an *abandon* harrowing in its fidelity to nature. The fire of her genius seemed to consume her. There was too little art and too much naturalism. She retired from the Stage in the zenith of her fame, a broken woman, and died suddenly a few years after.

Since her retirement Camille has found hundreds of exponents, but none were judged capable of taking the place of the great actress until Clara Morris electrified the dramatic world with the glittering beauty of her impersonation. As I write I can see the dream-like beauty of her face and hear her mellow voice, low and sweet like the strain of an Eolian lyre. Her Camille is a distinct creation and a striking contrast to that of Matilda Heron. It is an idealised Camille, a woman filled with an unutterable sadness, whose silent, patient endurance of a life which she instinctively abhors, seems indeed heroic. She is unceasingly seeking for a love which will redeem her, and when at last it is found the whole woman is transformed, she throws her entire being into the enjoyment of this sweet passion with a deliriously happy *abandon*; when the awful awakening comes, and when she gazes into the gulf which separates her from the man she loves, and the world she sought to enter, she is frozen with despair. She bows with mute resignation before the inevitable sacrifice of her great love, and goes back to the old life, hiding her poor broken heart with smiles, and luring death, her only release, with a frenzied gaiety. Her death scene is very sad; the gentle fading of the weary spirit

into the sweet embrace of a kindly death is full of indescribable pathos.

It would be difficult to analyse Miss Morris' emotional power. It has the charm of sensuous and the beauty of ideality. She is superior to Matilda Heron as an intellectual actress, but both stamp their creations with a fervid individuality.

Miss Morris has a most striking *personnel*; her broad, low brow, full-lidded, dreamy eyes, and mobile mouth are full pregnant with power. She has a kindly generous nature, and never forgets a friend.

Not long ago an old manager told me the following pleasant little anecdote of his experience with her:—

"She began her career in the ballet* of a small theatre in Cleveland, Ohio. When she was elevated to the dignity of small parts, her delight knew no bounds; consequently, when my company appeared at the theatre and we put on the 'Bohemian Girl,' in which she was told off for duty as a gipsy in the chorus, she was in despair. She thought if she went back to the ballet she would never get out of it again; so she came weeping to me and begged me to let her off. My chorus was made up of a lot of ugly old women, and a pretty girl, like she was, would have been a great addition, but I couldn't resist her tears, and so I gave in.

"Years after, I was manager of a big theatre in San Francisco. Miss Morris was billed to play. The first night arrived; a splendid audience was assembled; it was almost time for the curtain to be rung up, when I received word that she was unable to appear. I was in despair. I rushed off to her hotel to see her. Would she not try to come? I implored. Every excuse would be made for her. If she only walked through the part the audience would surely be satisfied! 'No! It was impossible; her physician strictly forbade all exertion.' Utterly discouraged, I was about to leave the room when she exclaimed, 'I have seen you before! Tell me, did you have an Opera Company in Cleveland the winter of 18—?' 'I did.' 'Well, do you remember a poor girl who begged off from chorus work?' I stared at her in amazement. I could remember nothing then, but that an audience was probably waiting. 'That poor girl was me! I never forget a good turn. Go back to the theatre, I'll be there in less than half an hour.' She kept her word, her illness seemed to vanish under the excitement, and she never played better in her life."

* In America the supernumeraries are called the ballet.

Miss Morris is now an almost constant sufferer ; she takes long intervals of rest, which are often broken by the demands of anxious managers, as the public, who adore her, do not wish to lose this splendidly gifted actress.

Maggie Mitchel is a name that has become a household word for all that is sweet, pure and bewitching on the stage. She is the creator of the emotional domestic comedy. Her petite figure, bright, winsome face, set off by masses of natural red-gold hair, and sweetly sympathetic voice qualify her admirably for the parts, half child, half woman, in which she excels. As Fanchon, or the Cricket of the Hearth, she is the innocent hoyden to perfection ; full of laughter, glee, and merry pranks one moment, and the next, a serious little soul, moving you to tears by the pathos of her childish soliloquies.

It was in this play that she first introduced the wonderful shadow dance. I can remember now how my childish heart throbbed to the lovely rhythm, as poor despised little Fanchon danced with her tiny shadow, and poured out her sorrows to the sweet, pale moon ! Ah ! it is the tender influence of such women, whose lives are pure as the limpid brook, that strengthens the fascinating spell of that entrancing "wonderland," the Stage.

Miss Mitchel has had some worthy followers of her school—Lotta, irresistible as a syren ; Minnie Palmer, dainty as a wild flower ; and Annie Pixley, as bright and sweet as a summer lark.

American actresses rarely excel in Tragedy. It may be that they lack the grand repose, the heroic intensity, which their English sisters bring to the interpretation of the Sublime Muse.

But one woman has built for herself the pillar of fame, the lamented Charlotte Cushman. The lurid splendour of her genius has blinded the eyes of the public to all lesser lights. Her Lady Macbeth was a great creation. Faithful in every detail to the traditions of tragical acting, she brought before you a picture of the woman thoroughly "unsexed," dauntless in her unflinching purpose, with a reason overthrown in the mad race of ambition, but a grand wreck withal. She was the Siddons of the American Stage.

Her tragic sceptre is waiting for one who is too young, too full of the sweetness of life, to claim it now. But when youth has faded, and the mellow years have deepened her experience, Queen Tragedy will find one who will wear right royally her mantle in our peerless Mary Anderson !

Our Musical=Box.

THE production of Bizet's "Leila" and Gounod's "Mirella" at Covent Garden was a laudable effort on the part of Colonel Mapleson to meet the public demand for novelty which is persistently dinned into every operatic impresario's ear when his intention to give a series of musico-dramatic entertainments becomes generally known. Having had such exceptional experiences of the attitude assumed by London society towards managerial enterprise in connection with the lyric drama, Colonel Mapleson ought to have known better than to lend a complaisant ear to counsels with the intrinsic fallacy of which he is probably better acquainted than any other living man. He should have stuck to "Carmen," "Faust," "Traviata," "Rigoletto," and a few other old staggers that would have filled his house with money night after night. English people will crowd a theatre times without number to hear music which they know by heart, and about which they can platitudinise without fear of contradiction. New or unfamiliar works bore them, firstly, by claiming their attention, and secondly, by calling upon them to exercise their judgment. When they have heard them they seldom understand them, and still more rarely feel certain as to what they ought to say about them. As the mental condition thus brought about is embarrassing—even somewhat humiliating to people who, being ignorant, are naturally conceited and self-sufficient—such people, constituting as they do the vast majority of operatic audiences in this country, not unnaturally refrain from "patronising" the productions of novelties. Nor does the prestige of a great composer's name—though haply other of his works be their prime favourites—avail to surmount their reluctance in this respect. They are conservative, not curious. Hence "Leila" and "Mirella," though teeming with lovely music, admirably cast, and excellently performed, proved disastrous, from a financial point of view, to the Covent Garden management. It is too late now to hark back to the details of their respective productions, but not to recall the fact that they made London music-lovers acquainted with several vocal and dramatic artistes of unusually high quality, notably, to Madame Nevada, a songstress of rare charm, culture, and delicacy, whose sweet voice, faultless intonation, and finished execution made a deep impression upon all who heard her; M. Lhérie, in whom experienced opera-goers recognised an actor and singer of extraordinary power, intelligence, and refinement; and Miss Engle, a young lady gifted with considerable personal attractions, a beautiful mezzo-soprano organ, and a singularly correct ear. That such artistes as these should have sung

some of the most delightful music ever composed to paper houses is a lasting reproach to the so-called musical public of this huge metropolis.

“Nordisa” may or may not be a bad joke, as some of my critical colleagues surmise; but it is certainly not a good opera. The story is absurd, the lyrics are feeble, and the music, not infrequently pretty, is uniformly insignificant, although the orchestra, technically considered, is throughout no less ingenious than effective, and the best musical number is unquestionably the overture. To whom much is given, from him shall much be required, and the manifold disappointments of “Nordisa” are intensified to Mr. Corder’s numerous admirers by the ineradicable conviction that so ripe a musician and ingenious a verse writer as he unquestionably is could have done far better, had such been his pleasure. It was a grave error on his part to select a plot, the dénouement of which hinges on a threadbare old device, worn out ages ago. As far as English opera is concerned, “the play’s the thing,” as Mr. Rosa frankly admitted only the other day, when writing upon a subject which he thoroughly understands; and British playgoers of to-day require something stronger and fresher in the way of “intrigue” than the substitution of one baby for another, especially when the exchange is effected on so paltry a pretext as that advanced by the defunct Christina Brand in extenuation of her misdeed—namely, that she wanted “to enjoy for, a while the sight of her own child finely dressed and admired by the village.” On so thin a foundation as this is built up the slender superstructure of plot, action, and dialogue constituting the “book” of “Nordisa.” Here it is, briefly synthetised:—Nordisa, the daughter of Baroness Nymark, is confided to Mrs. Brand, a wet-nurse, whose lacteal resources she shares with that person’s infant daughter. The change above alluded to having been effected, little Minna Brand is passed off upon the Baroness—a frivolous worldling—as the latter’s child, and Nordisa Nymark is brought up to the strangest calling ever yet practised by any village maiden, private or operatic. It is her business, when the “long, dark winter sets in,” year after year, to ascend a lofty mountain, on the upper heights of which certain cattle hibernate because “they cannot be brought down into the valley,” and there to remain, looking after them, until the spring. Meanwhile, their proper guardians, oxherds and goatherds of robust frames and iron constitutions, descend to the village, where they spend their winter comfortably, leaving Nordisa snowbound and alone, on the kindly and humane ground that she is an orphan, and, as such, “has fewest relations to mourn her loss!” Nordisa herself is a sort of *illuminée*, who looks upon it as a religious duty to pass several months annually in cold, darkness, and solitude for the sake of a few cows and goats—though how she keeps them from freezing and starving above the snow-line during a Norwegian winter is not apparent—and the dastard villagers take a base advantage of her piety and silliness to make her discharge duties by which, as they cynically admit,

her "life is fearfully risked." Meanwhile, Count Oscar Lydal, bound by oath to espouse the only daughter of Baroness Nymark, has seen Nordisa somewhere and fallen in love with her. He has no intentions, honourable or otherwise; but, having come to the village for the express purpose of fulfilling his engagement to Minna, and arriving just at the moment when Nordisa is about to climb to her winter quarters, escorted by the contemptible cowards before alluded to, he determines to follow her. About this time, too, her father turns up. He has been popularly supposed to be dead for years, but has really been sojourning in Siberia. Although he has returned to Norway for the express purpose of looking up his wife and child, when he is informed that the former is dead, and that the latter, grown up to womanhood, is at hand, he immediately goes to bed, thus missing the chance of seeing his daughter for months to come. Nordisa is then conducted to her hut, halfway up the mountain, and left there to perish of cold and ennui. Oscar, however, soon rejoins her, and makes love to her with unprincipled promptitude. She returns his passion instantly, and asks him into the hut. The weather is unfavourable for a descent of the mountain, but he declines her invitation, having to attend his own wedding the next morning. By main force, however, she drags him indoors, whereupon an avalanche rolls down the hill-side, accurately sparing the hut, but blocking the path to the valley below. Count Oscar and Nordisa are therefore shut up together in a wooden *châlet* just big enough to hold them, with the prospect of spending the whole winter together—which, as a matter of fact, they do. We are not told how they pass the time in such close quarters, whether or not they have enough to eat, or indeed anything about them; but we are led to infer that the Count must have been profoundly bored by his long *tête-à-tête* with the unsophisticated peasant girl, for, as soon as warm weather has enabled him to get away from her, we find him in his aunt's house, perfectly ready and willing to marry the young lady whom he supposes to be his cousin. She, though fondly enamoured of somebody else, is preparing for her nuptials with unmitigated cheerfulness. Her lover dislikes the arrangement, but readily consoles himself for his disappointment by singing a song about a castle in the air. The *dénouement* is, of course, a foregone conclusion. At the "psychological moment"—that is to say, just after the signing of the marriage contract—everybody concerned in the final discovery puts in an appearance; Nordisa herself, her long-lost father, her repentant foster-father (confession in hand), &c., &c. When she finds out that she is Baroness Nymark's lawful daughter and heiress, instead of dismissing the pitiful sneak who unjustifiably won her heart and then deliberately threw her over, she takes him to her bosom without a second's hesitation; Minna gets her philosophical lieutenant, who characteristically bags his rival's army-promotion as well as his light-hearted bride; and everybody is made happy in defiance of honour, honesty, good feeling, and probability. The music is worthy of the story, and the avalanche of both. Unqualified praise, however, is due to the artistes engaged in the

performance. Madame Burns sings and acts delightfully as Minna; Madame Gaylord is a sweet, sympathetic Nordisa; Messrs. McGuckin, Sauvage, and Eugene do wonders with the unthankful parts of Count Oscar, Lieutenant Hansen, and Andreas Brand; all the subordinate rôles are well filled; the achievements of the orchestra and chorus are unexceptionable. The opera, especially the avalanche, was favourably received on the first night of its London production, though not with the enthusiasm it elicited from Liverpool audiences. I shall be surprised if it obtains wide and lasting popularity in this metropolis.

Miss Geraldine Ulmar, the new Rose Maybud, who has temporarily replaced Miss Leonora Braham at the Savoy Theatre, is a pretty woman, a good singer, and an admirable actress. Her first regular appearance on London boards, which took place on the 7th ult., established her conclusively in public favour. She is thoroughly versed in the humour of the Damon and Pythias of comic opera, having played the parts of Yum-Yum and Patience with great *éclat* in Germany and the United States. Even the cantankerous critics of Berlin had no fault to find with her, while those of New York and other great American cities paid her lavish tribute of enthusiastic praise. "Ruddigore"—especially the second act—has been judiciously "pulled together" since the memorable night of its original production, and is now played with exemplary closeness and crispness. As a musical work it will always rank amongst Sullivan's most genial and highly-finished compositions, certain of its numbers being not only masterpieces of constructive ability, but *chefs-d'œuvre* of dramatic expression. A finer song than the "Ghost-Lay," with its subtle, weird orchestral accompaniment, has not been composed within the memory of man, nor can I call to mind a more beautiful and refined piece of concerted vocal music than the "Madrigal." The uniformly artistic performance of this opera at the Savoy by principals and subordinates alike, the charm of its music, and the perfection of its *mise-en-scène* are achievements of which everybody concerned in its production has reason to be proud. Such excellence of *ensemble* and completeness of detail may be sought for in vain on the stage of any Continental theatre. The leading musical and dramatic critic of Germany has frankly confessed as much. It was with unfeigned pleasure that, a fortnight or so ago, I read in the *Cologne Gazette* the magnanimous avowal that—in connection with the production of comic opera—German managers have everything to learn from their English colleagues. Alluding to the music of "Patience," moreover, the writer of the article to which I refer observed that "from the first to the last note it was a convincing proof of the extraordinary creative talent and consummate artistic taste of the gifted English musician," adding that "some of the choruses alone would ensure to Sir Arthur Sullivan a foremost place amongst the very first of German composers." This unreserved recognition of our countryman's genius, emanating from so authoritative a quarter, cannot but be deeply gratifying to every British

musician. As a deliverance of German judgment, unbiassed by prejudice or jealousy, it comes perhaps a little late in the day; but *meglio tardi che mai!* Meanwhile, the dead-set made at "The Golden Legend" by Berlin journalists and composers has found fresh expression in an extravagant burlesque of that fine work, written, arranged, and conducted by the Brothers Moszkowski, one of whom is a clever writer of satirical verse, enjoying considerable popularity in Prussia, while the other is a composer of talent *hors ligne*, favourably known to the London public by his cantata, "Joan of Arc," his delicious "Orchestral Suite," and several *cahiers* of delightful P.F. duets. The fun of "Die Katzensgoldene Legende" (the "Pinchbeck Legend") is intensely local, appealing exclusively to the sense of humour possessed by people "on the Spree," and the music has been selected from amongst the more familiar student-songs and "Gassenhauer" (barrel-organ tunes) of the day. Oddly enough, the satire of the burlesque is directed more witheringly at the bad singing of the lady who sustained the chief soprano part at the first performance of the "Legend" in the Royal Opera-house than at the work itself or its composer—the central joke of the piece being a miraculous cure of Prince Henry's chronic stomach-ache, effected by a screeching damsel whose intonation leaves everything to be desired. The burlesque has hitherto only been performed in one or two private houses, and is altogether of too slender and trivial a character to court publicity. I have read the verses, some of which are very laughable; but their comicality, such as it is, is not transferable to any realm beyond the Prussian frontiers.

There will be no dearth of Italian opera in this Metropolis during the Jubilee season, for Colonel Mapleson, undiscouraged by public unthankfulness, has made arrangements to open Her Majesty's early next month with a strong company of cosmopolitan vocalists, and Signor Lago, by the time these jottings shall appear in print, will have commenced his series of operatic entertainments at Covent Garden. The Italian *impresario* has engaged, according to his prospectus, several singers whose renown is already established in this country, and no fewer than sixteen vocalists of both sexes with whom he invites the London public to make acquaintance, under his auspices, for the first time. He also promises to bring out Glinka's "Life for the Czar," never heretofore performed in England, and to revive Cimarosa's "Matrimonio Segreto," individual numbers of which are more familiar to British music-lovers than the work itself in its entirety. I do not anticipate that either of these operas will bring an overwhelming amount of grist to the managerial mill; but, if the cast announced be adhered to, they will be unexceptionably performed, and, on that ground alone, ought to draw a few good houses. The leading parts in the Prussian work will be sustained by Albani, Scalchi, Gayarre and Devoyod—surely a quadrilateral attraction of the first order. In "Fidelio" we shall hear Signorina Mei; in "Norma," Madame de Cepeda; and in "L'Africaine" Signorina Rossini (a name of good omen),

Miss Ella Russell and Senor Gayarre. In all thirty performances will be given.

On Friday, May 13, Signor S. Scuderi, the mandoline-player who made such an agreeable impression in London musical circles last season, gave the first of a series of recitals—not as well attended as it deserved to be—at Steinway Hall. His performances on the dainty little instrument that is so popular in Florence, and on the banjo—by the way, the banjo craze has of late subsided with astonishing completeness—were simply charming. Four of the nine Richter concerts have already come off in a manner fully worthy of the great Kapellmeister from whom they take their title. Dr. Hans has made important changes in the *personnel* of his orchestra—changes that, without exception, are improvements. Amongst the violinists the English element is stronger than it was last year. I do not think that our native fiddlers “lay over” their German predecessors in technical skill; but they certainly possess better instruments, and consequently their enlistment in the Richter band has imparted great additional strength and sweetness to the *ensemble*. Amongst the novelties of the “*cyklus*” already produced (May 16th and 23rd) were Dvorák’s “Symphonic Variations,” which, judging by their reception as well as by their extraordinary intrinsic beauty, are destined to figure in Richter’s London *répertoire* for many seasons to come; and Bruckner’s “Symphony in E,” the musical interest of which is greater than its charm to the ear of the average concert-room audience. Novelties to come are Goldmark’s “Dance of Phantoms,” Hubert Parry’s “Third Symphony,” Frederick Cowen’s “Fifth Symphony,” and Villiers Stanford’s “Irish Symphony.” The first of Mr. Gustav Ernest’s two miscellaneous concerts came off on the 17th ult., and furnished that meritorious pianist with an occasion for introducing a new work, written for soprano, tenor and chorus, and entitled “Love’s Conquest, a Village Idyll.” A great part of the music of this agreeable composition has manifestly been written *à l’intention* of Mr. Ernest’s well-balanced choir, the training of which does him infinite credit. Miss Annie Marriott and Mr. Hirwen Jones sustained the *solì* with praiseworthy efficiency, and further interest was imparted to the entertainment by the admirable playing of Senor Tivadar Nachèz and Herr Hegyesi, the fine vocalisation of Mrs. Thayer, and the unaffected ballad-singing of Miss Clara Myers.

Mrs. Bell Cole, the eminent American contralto, is in London for the season. I believe this is her first visit to the “old country.” She is gifted with a voice of extraordinary power and beauty, and her singing is supremely sympathetic. I was fortunate enough to hear her a few days after her arrival, and her rendering of several familiar English songs—amongst them Miss Kingston’s “For Lack of Thee,” which promises to become a public favourite—gave me unalloyed pleasure. Vittoria Carpi, too, is amongst his old admirers, in fine voice, and with his “blushing

honours new upon him," for he is now an Academician, "elected by acclamation," and Bologna has enwreathed his brows with the laurel so rarely bestowed upon executant artistes by that stately and most critical of Æmilian cities. Madame de Hesse-Wartegg (Minnie Hauk) has left England for her château in Switzerland, whence she intends to proceed to Baden-Baden, there to take the waters and enjoy a brief rest from her professional labours, to be renewed in the course of this month at Her Majesty's—perhaps also at Drury Lane. The sisters Douste de Fortis have returned to this Metropolis from America, where they achieved an unexampled success during the past winter. Their inimitable duet-playing will assuredly be one of the most striking and attractive features of the musical Jubilee season. Pauline Ellice, too, our own little native prodigy, intends to make a serious bid for popularity this summer. Her playing is absolutely masculine in its force, steadiness, and intelligence. A few years hence, if she fulfil her present promise, she will be one of the finest classical pianists in Europe; as it is she is "hard to beat." Signor Carlo Albanesi is steadily winning the place in public favour to which his great artistic merits entitled him long ago. His pianoforte contributions to the programme of his concert (May 16) were more than unexceptionable; they belonged to the very highest class of technical and interpretative feats.

Amongst the more recent musical publications which have come under my notice, those worthiest of especial mention are Mr. De Lara's new song, "After Silent Years," a beautiful setting of some no less beautiful words by Lord Lytton (Enoch and Sons), and a set of twelve old English ditties, composed by Mr. Erskine Allon to well-known verses by Prior, Butler, Walsh, Herrick, Suckling, Rochester, and other shining lights of long-past literary ages. Several of these lays are of a quality that must command every musician's approval, the melodies being in perfect keeping with the tone and feeling of the poems. Let me instance "Weep You No More," "Death," "To Daisies," "Love and Life," and "Absence." This interesting *recueil* is printed by the Musical Publishing Company. "Long Live Victoria," the Chevalier Bach's Jubilee song, is bright and spirited; indeed, just what such a *chanson d'occasion* should be, with a strong, bold tune and a catching refrain. It is published by Jeffreys, of Berners Street. Mr. F. Stanley Smith has written a pretty dancing waltz, somewhat ambitiously high, "A Glimpse of Paradise," applications for which—and they should be many—must be addressed to 6, Portland Terrace, Regent's Park. Clement Scott's touching verses, "The Lighthouse Pier," have been simply, but pleasantly, set by Mr. J. L. Roeckel (Ricordi), and the result is a capital drawing-room song, which I recommend to sentimental young ladies and gentlemen with perfect sincerity. A promising young composer, who has adopted the romantic pseudonym of "Leslie Mayne," has sent me two well-written and melodious songs, respectively called "Pack, Clouds, Away" and "When Delia" (Joseph Williams), with which the musical readers of

THE THEATRE will be glad to make acquaintance. I have also before me a four-part song of his composition—"There's a Bower of Roses"—which reveals sound musical knowledge and no mean constructive capacity. Go on and prosper, Mr. "Leslie Mayne," gifted son of a gifted mother; for my part, speaking as a musician, I shall be glad to hear from you again.

CLAVICHORD.



Our Play-Box.

"THE RED LAMP."

A new and original Drama, in four acts, by OUTRAM TRISTRAM.

Produced at the Comedy Theatre, April 20th, 1887.

Paul Demetrius ...	Mr. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.	Tolstol ...	Mr. FRED. HARRISON.
General Morakoff ...	Mr. C. H. BROOKFIELD.	Officer of Police ...	Mr. S. RODNEY.
Allan Villiers ...	Mr. CHARLES SUDDEN.	Servant ...	Mr. SHIRLEY.
Prince A. Valerian ...	Mr. LAWRENCE CAUTLEY.	Princess Claudia Morakoff ...	Lady MONCKTON.
Ivan Zizzulic ...	Mr. ROBERT PATEMAN.	Olga Morakoff ...	Miss MARION TERRY.
Kertch ...	Mr. CHARLES DODSWORTH.	Fel se ...	Miss ROSINA FILIPPI.
Count Bohrenheim ...	Mr. SAM MATTHEWS.	Madame Dennenberg ...	Mrs. CONYERS D ARCY.
Turgan ...	Mr. THORNBURY.	Countess Voelcker ...	Miss MABEL MILLET.
Rheinveck ...	Mr. J. NUTCOMBE GOULD.		

When a clever and popular actor assumes for the first time the reins of management, it is natural that great interest should be felt in the new venture. Mr. Herbert Beerbohm-Tree has justified this interest shown by his friends and admirers, who filled the Comedy Theatre on the opening night, by proving that he made one more in the ranks of managers to whom we owe the death and burial of the Star system. An efficient company and musical director, scenery and stage appointments of the best—nothing was neglected to make a success, and the new manager appeared in a part that showed him to the greatest advantage.

As to the merits of the play selected, there is something to say on both sides. "The Red Lamp," announced at the close of the performance to be from the pen of Mr. Outram Tristram, has some serious faults, but it has also good qualities. The public is ready enough to cry against the want of originality; still, it invariably objects to an author's breaking away from certain rules; there must be a love story; and a sisterly devotion as the chief motive of a play hardly satisfies them. To my mind there is no special reason why this should not be the principal interest, had it been brought into greater conflict with the wife's love for her husband; but it is not until the last act, when the husband rather surprises us by saying that he loves his wife "dearer than his life," that we are made to understand that their mutual feeling is anything more than rather cold and courteous friendship. This is one of the author's greatest mistakes, and the next is to raise one's expectations until, at the end of the third act, the tension is wrought to the highest pitch, then to allow the story to dwindle away into nothingness, and the whole thing to fall flat for want of a climax.

The story opens during a ball at the Morakoff Palace in St. Petersburg. General Morakoff and his wife, Princess Claudia, are devoted to the Czar. The Princess is passionately, almost ferociously, attached to his cause; she is hand and glove with Demetrius, a chief of the Secret Police, who is treated as a valued old friend, and appears to have free access to the palace at any hour of the day or night. Until now, the Princess has been the bitterest foe to Nihilists; information supplied by her has been the means of many important Nihilists cooling their ardour in the snows of Siberia. During this very ball, a raid is made on a neighbouring house, a Nihilist being arrested and wounded; and, while the guests are watching this scene from the balcony, Princess Claudia glories and exults at the thought that it is all her doing. But she soon receives a terrible shock. A message comes to her from her young brother, Prince Alexis, the one great love of her life; Alexis, whom she cherishes with almost motherly affection. In one instant, this wretched woman learns that her brother has become one of the most active Nihilists. And who brings this message? Ivan Zazzulic, a Russian journalist, reputed to be one of the most loyal subjects of his Majesty, but, in truth, one of his most dangerous enemies. It is he who, taking advantage of Alexis's great youth and ardent nature, has, like a tempting fiend, enticed him to join a conspiracy against the Czar's life, and persuaded the enthusiastic and misguided youth that murder may be a noble deed. We are glad that the author has made Alexis so young, thus allowing us to pity him for being made the tool of wicked men. Ivan, who is a rejected lover of the Princess, also shows her a photograph in which the conspirators are taken in one group, her brother's face being amongst them. His life depends on the safety of the others; to save her brother's life, therefore, this haughty Princess has to accept their terms and humiliate herself to be their aid. Whenever the General and Demetrius contemplate a raid on some suspected house Claudia will place a lamp with a red shade in a certain window as a warning to the Nihilists. Of course, she does not give way without a fierce struggle. This scene is very effective, and a promising conclusion to a first act, which does not come to the point with sufficient rapidity in the opening scenes.

Three weeks elapse, and, during that time, Demetrius has been unsuccessful in all his raids. A gossiping French lady's-maid awakes his suspicion by mentioning that three times has the red lamp been placed in the window, in spite of her putting it back in its usual place; the gift of a diamond ring further loosens her tongue as to the recent strange behaviour of the Princess. The lamp is evidently a signal, but "is it love or Nihilism?" Demetrius concludes that the Princess is carrying on an intrigue with Zazzulic, and imparts his suspicions to the General, who then insists on the red lamp being removed to his study. As, acting on the advice of Demetrius, the

General has also refused to tell his wife when the next raid on Nihilists is to take place, they must be warned at once, of this new state of things. She resolves to visit their headquarters (apparently a sculptor's studio) under the escort of her step-daughter's *fiancé*, an American journalist, who knows her secret, and is the one character who is always saying or doing the right thing at the right moment. But the sharp eyes of the French maid have seen her slip out of the house to join him, and Demetrius is at once informed of the fact. This act is rather long for the purpose it serves, and might have been condensed into one scene.

The third act is the most thrilling. We are in the studio, from under the floor of which a passage has been excavated right under the street, where a mine has been laid; some hours hence, when the Czar passes, this will be fired from some distant point. But Alexis, who is the one designated for this, after appealing in vain to his accomplices that some warning to keep away may be given to those who will follow the Czar, resolves to fire the mine from this very room and perish with his victims. A loud knocking is heard at the gate; the two who have worked at the mine are made to disappear by the secret trap, and the door is opened to Demetrius, accompanied by two police agents, who find Alexis and Zazzulic apparently paying a visit to their friend the sculptor. He tells them that, as a mere formality, the house must be searched, and this is done without result. But, before taking his leave, Demetrius has some of the furniture displaced, and sounds the walls with his stick. This is a terrible moment of suspense, for not only may he discover the trap under the carpet, but, if his stick should touch one particular spot, it will fire the mine. The danger, however, is passed over. But Demetrius intends to return; his visit is but a pretext; he is persuaded that Claudia has left the palace to keep a rendezvous with Zazzulic in this very house, and concludes that he has come too soon. Indeed, he has scarcely left when Claudia and the American arrive. She relates how the red lamp has become suspicious; appeals to Alexis to renounce his companions, and, on his refusal, declares that she will tear him from their clutches in spite of all. This is a powerful scene, and Claudia would be in real danger at their hands but for the cool courage of the American. Again a knocking at the gate; Demetrius and the General with him. How is Claudia to account for her presence in such a place? Quick, before the gate is opened, the American makes Alexis write a note to his sister, requesting her to come, as he has been suddenly taken ill; so when the General bursts in, expecting to surprise his wife with a lover, he finds her standing by the prostrate form of her brother, and she hands him the note, the curtain coming down on the complete rout of Demetrius's plan. This act, though it also would bear some little condensing, is powerful and effective, and the author has given

the right tone to it by making the American, who is ready to do anything to save the life of Alexis, refuse his hand with the words—"No Prince; I cannot recognise the friend in the conspirator." Nihilism is a subject that it would be perhaps best to leave alone, but here at least it is not glorified.

The last act is most unsatisfactory. Zazzulic, frightened by the visit of Demetrius, thinks he will find safety in betraying his accomplices. He writes to the General to offer the proofs of the conspiracy against a free pardon for himself, but the letter never reaches its destination, and when the betrayer comes to the palace, he is met by Alexis, who taunts him with his falseness, and threatens to expose him to the other conspirators, unless he gives up the accusing photograph. Zazzulic yields, but at the same time stabs Alexis to death, and makes his exit, followed by a Nihilist servant, knife in hand, thus we understand that he shortly receives his quietus. But what about the mine? Alexis is dead, but other conspirators remain to fire it. The photograph being destroyed, just as the Czar is signalled as entering the fatal street, the Princess sends the American to warn them, and we are expected to believe that he does so successfully. In answer to her husband's questions, she replies that her brother has "died for Russia," an explanation which, strange to say, he appears to consider quite sufficient. All this is very weak and disappointing, improbable and puerile. It is a thousand pities, for the audience, who are interested by the really good fourth act, go away feeling as if a bad joke had been played upon them at the last.

The interpretation is good all round. Lady Monckton, who has conquered the nervousness of the first night, is especially good in the last scene of the first act, when Claudia learns that her brother is a Nihilist, all the conflicting emotions of the moment are depicted by her with great skill and effect. In the fourth act, she lacks sufficient physical power unfortunately, her voice has not the ringing tones required for a woman at bay; but her reading of the part is good, and her acting intelligent throughout, and if sometimes she falls short of the requirements of such a part, at any rate she makes no mistake. Miss Marion Terry is wasted on a part that is of little use to the play. Miss Rosina Filippi's impersonation of the French maid is a gem, and her scene with Demetrius is undoubtedly one of the greatest hits of the performance. Mr. Lawrence Cautley, as the misguided Alexis, acts with an earnestness and fervour which are very good. Some of the longest speeches fall to his lot, and are remarkably well spoken. It is not Mr. Brookfield's fault if General Morakoff is absolutely uninteresting, he acts the part as it is written. Mr. Charles Sugden and Mr. Robert Pateman render good service respectively. Mr. Beerbohm-Tree has made a step onward in his impersonation of Demetrius; always a master in the art of making-up, his transformation is so complete that when he first steps on to

the stage the audience refuse to recognise him in the stout, bald old gentleman, whose features and gait are absolutely unlike the actor; every detail of voice, look, gesture, all show the greatest artistic study. The part has the fault of being drawn in rather a monotonous key. The character has to go through a series of scenes that very much resemble each other; and this makes the task of the interpreter all the more difficult. Mr. Beerbohm-Tree has never done anything better than this. With all his attention to detail, he knows how to stop short of over-elaboration, and once more prove himself a true artiste.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

"TEA."

A Farcical Comedy, in three acts, by MAURICE NOEL.

Produced at the Criterion Theatre, on May 4th, 1887.

Sir James Pompasour ...	Mr. FELIX MORRIS.	Babbage	Mr. FRED. IRVING.
Harry Holmwood ...	Mr. W. E. GREGORY.	Shimons	Mr. H. HOWARD.
Captain Lonsdale ...	Mr. J. NUTCOMBE GOULD.	Thomas	Mr. A. H. CREE.
Doctor Locke ...	Mr. STEPHEN CAFFEY.	Mrs. Bulpin	Miss FFOLLIOTT PAGET.
Doctor Kee ...	Mr. E. M. ROBSON.	Mary Bulpin	Miss MABEL MILLETT.
Magnum	Mr. S. WILKINSON.	Julia Pompasour ...	Miss EVELYN FORREST.

This is a bright, brisk piece, somewhat thin in its constitution, without sufficient plot or "business" to support its three acts, but still highly amusing. Compressed, it would gain in effect, as will be seen from the nature of its incidents. The sister of a stingy old baronet conceives the idea of drugging him with a potent Indian preparation, thus weakening his intellect temporarily, with a view to his detention in a mad house. This unfriendly, not to say unsisterly scheme, which might subject the lady to the attentions of the nearest magistrate, was duly carried out, only it was contrived by some of the young people that the conspirator should be caught in her own trap, and made to drink the mixture intended for her brother. Hence a number of farcical turns, jovialities, mad doctors, imperturbable butler, &c., carried out with plenty of bustle. Nothing could be better acted, Miss Ffolliott Paget, in particular, showing extraordinary animation, not only of movement, but of facial expression and happy inflexions of voice. The mad doctors, well named "Dr. Locke" and "Dr. Kee," were excellent. It is astonishing that Mr. Robson, who is the happy proprietor of a face that, without other exertion, produces laughter, should not hold a more conspicuous place, and be more "present" to the public than he actually is. He can assume a delightful vacancy and fatuousness with a sort of helplessness and suffering. Mr. Morris, the victim of the drug, "Cocculus Medicus," was unflagging in his efforts. He, too, has an invaluable "quince-like" expression; his voice is tuned to a perpetual querulousness. The whole performance was much relished; and the author, who is described mysteriously in one of the papers as "a gallant officer, not wholly unknown at Torquay," is likely to be heard of again.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

“THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.”

The Comedy, in Five Acts, by GEO. COLMAN and DAVID GARRICK.

Revived at the Strand Theatre, May 9th, 1887.

Lord Ogleby	Mr. WILLIAM FARREN.	Traverse	Mr. R. G. LEGGE.
Sir John Melville	Mr. H. B. CONWAY.	Mrs. Heidelberg	Miss FANNY COLEMAN.
Sterling	Mr. HENRY CRISP.	Miss Sterling	Miss ANGELA FENTON.
Lovewell	Mr. REEVES SMITH.	Fanny	Miss MAUD STRUDWICK.
Canton	Mr. ROBERT SOUTAR.	Betty	Miss FLORENCE SUTHERLAND.
Brush... ..	Mr. MARK KINGHORNE.	Mrs. Trusty	Miss ADA FERRAR.
Serjeant Flowers	Mr. JAMES MANNING.	Nancy	Miss MARY BURTON.

One of the treasures of the Garrick Club is a picture of brilliant colours and character, by Zoffany (the actors' painter), representing a scene in this good old comedy, which may be ranked almost in the second class. This scene—which is next in rank to a drama itself, so full of a vivid interest is it—exhibits the old crabbed Lord Ogleby playing off his coquetries on the stately and vivacious Mrs. Baddeley. There is in his face that mixture of expression which is the triumph of a painter. This comedy was the cause of an amusing dispute between the joint authors, Garrick and Colman the elder, and their controversy is well worth study, as it throws much light on the vexed question of originality and property in ideas. The share of each, however, both in the suggestion of characters and writing of particular scenes, has been accurately fixed. The chief interest centres in Lord Ogleby, originally delineated by King, the original Sir Peter Teazle, though it went near to being played by Garrick himself. Two or three generations ago it fell into the hands of Farren, sen., or “Old Farren,” as he is better known; and now we have “Young Farren,” or the younger Farren, in his father's character, a ripe, sound actor, to whom each year is adding a greater breadth of style. His Lord Ogleby is a very finished piece of character indeed, full of Meissonnier touches; the face worn and dilapidated, and yet well repaired by the aid of his valet, Canton. The alternations between twinges of pain and complacent vanity were truly grotesque; excellent, too, the air of offended aristocratic dignity at the horse laughs with which the coarse and vulgar cit greeted the proposal that the ancient peer should marry his youthful daughter. The scene with the young lady is, perhaps, the best in the whole, and the equivoque truly entertaining. One wishes that the authors had allotted more to Lord Ogleby. Modern dramatists might well study the art by which the peculiarities of a leading character are brought out, not by its own display, but by the operation of subordinate characters. In this instance, Lord Ogleby would be very incomplete without the stimulating action of Canton, his valet, so excellently performed by Soutar. There was a complacent servility and devotion, an indifference to, and often enjoyment of his master's attacks and impatience, that was admirable. Miss Fenton, who was so successful as Lady Teazle, was scarcely so forcible here. She was rather too petulant, and her “reading” wanted that “largeness” and repose which belongs to old comedy. But she is a pleasing actress. Mr. Conway, as Sir John, looked well

as always, in his becoming dress, and was vivacious and spirited. A little more stateliness and dignity would, however, have improved the performance. An old prologue was given, but had little effect, perhaps owing to the allusions to the recent demise of Hogarth, the painter, who was bewailed as though "he had died o' yesterday." A reflection suggested by this comedy was that the original author of "The Rivals" had drawn on it for the idea of Mrs. Malaprop and Brush, the valet. In "The School for Scandal" the valet hears his master's bell ringing repeatedly without attending to it, exactly as Brush does here; while his proposal to raise money by way of annuity, &c., were taken from a comedy of Murphy's.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

"VITTORIA CONTARINI."

A Romantic Play, in four acts and a prologue, by A. W. DUBOURG.

First produced in London at Princess's Theatre, May 11th, 1837.

Baron Falkenburg ...	Mr. A. M. DENISON.	Lieutenant Platten ...	Mr. C. DENTON.
Maximilian Von Stettenheim ...	Mr. GLEN WYNN	Captain Müller ...	Mr. S. JERRAM.
Count Grimani ...	Mr. BRANDON THOMAS.	Major Stoltz ...	Mr. F. JERRARD.
Count Contarini ...	Mr. WM. FARREN, JUNR.	Police Agent ...	Mr. W. BRUNKER.
Marco Contarini ...	Mr. FULLER MELLISH.	Jailor ...	Mr. E. LESTER.
Count Salvetti ...	Mr. STRATTON RODNEY.	Stella ...	Miss ADELA MEASOR.
Pietro ...	Mr. CHARLES DODSWORTH.	Marietta ...	Miss L. TINSLEY.
		Vittoria Contarini ...	Miss LAURA VILLIERS.

The action takes place in Venice, commencing shortly before the Battle of Custoza, 1866.

To many who attended Miss Laura Villiers's *Matinée*, the story of "Vittoria Contarini" is not new. Mr. A. W. Dubourg published his play so far back as 1875, and a story adapted from the play has also appeared in the pages of the *Temple Bar Magazine*. I will therefore condense the plot in a few words ere entering into the merits of the piece from a dramatic point of view.

Vittoria, the daughter of a patrician and patriotic house, the Contarini, has been accidentally insulted by an Austrian officer, who, in revenge for "the frowns of the Venetian ladies," had, in an idle mood, sworn to kiss the first woman he meets coming out of church. Marco Contarini, a hot-headed boy, her brother, on hearing of this, has struck Colonel Maximilian Von Stettenheim across the lips with his cane, and a duel, as a matter of course, is arranged between the two. The Colonel is an accomplished swordsman, Marco an inexperienced boy, who has no chance against such an antagonist. Maddened with her own grief and the reproaches of her father, who tells her that if Marco dies his blood will be upon her head, Vittoria takes a bold resolution and secretly visits Maximilian to implore him to spare her brother's life. At first he is inflexible. The Secret Society of Venetians has threatened him with sure and swift death if he spare not Marco; to be merciful under such circumstances would be to acknowledge himself a coward. Yet such is the power of beauty and gentleness that Vittoria wrings a half promise from him, and when her brother returns to her without a scratch and having wounded the skilled swordsman, who scarce defended himself, her

heart goes out to the gallant Colonel, whose generosity has atoned for the insult that was not personal to herself. An insult that, as she bitterly remembers, was considered of so little moment by her affianced husband, whom she respected if she loved him not, that he refused to avenge it because he owed his life to Venice. From Grimani she hears that the scheme of the Secret Society is ripe for action; the Austrian garrison has of late been greatly reduced, and all the officers are to be massacred during a supper given to them by the chief of the Austrian police. In order to save Maximilian's life without betraying her own people, she sends a note requiring his presence at the time when he ought to be with his comrades. The handsome Colonel complies with alacrity. Accustomed to easy conquests, he has not a very high opinion of women in general, and arrives in the guise of a conqueror. Her true womanly dignity soon shows him his mistake; she tells him she has sent for him to thank him for her brother's life. Her nervous anxiety to detain him, and some words that inadvertently escape her, arouse his suspicion, and hearing the fatal signal bell, she confesses to him that she has saved his life. But at what cost? The loss of her honour. By the treachery of a servant her note to Maximilian has, unknown to her, been made to serve as a warning to the Austrians; her father, brother, and betrothed are arrested as conspirators in her very presence and they all disown her and revile her for dishonouring them and herself by, as they believe, receiving Maximilian as her lover and betraying her own people to the enemy. The act in which this occurs is certainly the best and strongest in the play. The sight of what she has suffered for his sake kindles the purest flame of love and devotion in the hitherto cold and rather selfish heart of Maximilian; he is on the verge of betraying his duty and giving away his life to save that of her people, by aiding their escape, all other means having failed; when the declaration of freedom for Venice and general amnesty to political prisoners sets all matters right. Vittoria, whose conduct has been explained, is forgiven, and consent is given to her union with Maximilian. Such is the story, which contains effective situations and many dramatic opportunities. But, unfortunately, the play as it stands shows the author to be still unskilled in stage craft. One of the chief faults is apparent in the very fact that in giving a resumé of the plot I have scarcely mentioned one of the most important characters in the play, Grimani, a character all important in itself, requiring a first-rate actor as an impersonator, having some excellent scenes allotted to him, and being almost constantly on the stage, but yet representing an almost separate interest instead of being so interwoven with the story as to be the very essence of it. It is strange that this Grimani, the chief of the Secret Society, who, for the purpose of working for the freedom of Venice, passes himself off to the Austrians as one of their spies, and who is the promoter of the conspiracy—that this man, with a price

on his head, and who is the affianced husband of Vittoria, still might be left out of the play and merely alluded to by the others, without in the least interfering with the story. He is mixed up with almost every scene, yet his presence never seems in any way to forward the action. This is a mistake. However well drawn and consistent a character may be, he should not, so to speak, be an outrider to the chief interest of the play; a dramatic author should above all work for a harmonious whole. Though well written, the dialogue requires much compression, and coming after the very strong situation at the end of the third act, the last one is weak and unsatisfactory. Certainly, in these days of realism, a literary play is most acceptable. There is some excellent material in "Vittoria Contarini," and if Mr. Dubourg would take a *collaborateur*, be he manager or author, but especially skilled in the science of the stage, the interesting story might be made into a really very good play.

As for the acting, it, too, evidently suffered from insufficient rehearsing; no one of the performers committed any grave fault or mistake, nor did any one make any great hit. The several performances might be described as tame, but full of promise. If, as I am given to understand, the play was got up in less than a fortnight it is greatly to the credit of the actors that they did so well. Miss Laura Villiers was an interesting Vittoria, displaying much feeling; but lacking the fire and passion that an Italian woman would display when torn by such conflicting emotions. Mr. Brandon Thomas, very cleverly "made up," gave an excellent reading of Grimani, but now and then showed hesitation in his rendering. Still, these two characters are so very exacting that one cannot in all fairness say they would not have ripened into perfection under happier circumstances. Mr. Fuller Mellish, as Marco, having but a comparatively short part, requiring earnestness and impetuosity, but no light and shade, was, perhaps, of all the performers the one most at his ease, and did remarkably well. A *débutant*, Mr. Glen Wynn, appeared as Maximilian in a fashion that bids fair for his future on the stage. Gentlemanly and easy in manner, his acting during the first acts of the play was very good; but when the scoffer suddenly becomes the earnest lover, and is ready to give away his life for the woman he worships, Mr. Wynn appeared to tread unknown ground, and hardly to realise the situation; but there is no reason to believe he will not gain the warmth he lacks at present. Mr. W. Farren, jun., Mr. Dodsworth, and Miss A. Measor rendered good service in small parts. The staging of the play was, like the rehearsals, insufficient. Altogether, it was a slow performance; each was individually and obviously doing his best, but there was a want of generalship, and both author and actors would have gained materially by a further postponement of the *matinée*.

Our Omnibus=Box.

Next month I shall be able to allude in detail to the production of "As in a Looking-glass," the dramatised novel by Mr. Grove and Mr. Philips at the Opera Comique. Mrs. Bernard-Beere is presumably wise in her generation. For the amusement of an essentially vulgar age she has produced an undeniably vulgar play; vulgar in sentiment, vulgar in manner, vulgar in tone, vulgar in treatment. A more repulsive set of people has seldom been collected in one hideous story, and it is a serious sign of the times that English men and women of birth and breeding can enjoy—as they do enjoy—a series of pictures of man's rascality and woman's meanness, of the unblushing blackguardism of gentlemen, and the arrogant unscrupulousness of ladies who are supposed to be types of men and women of the day. The theatre is crowded every night to see in action the life of an abandoned adventuress, whose cowardice to her own sex is voted clever, and whose crocodile grief is supposed to be the embodiment of true womanly sentiment. Over this deplorable picture of society life that is destitute of any sense of honour, and adorned with the cheap wit of the sporting newspaper, much good acting has been wasted, particularly by Mrs. Bernard-Beere herself, whose death scene is one of the most painfully powerful specimens of realistic acting that the modern stage has seen. "As in a Looking-glass" is to the English stage what "Nana" was to the French, and the death of Lena Despard choking from the poison-pangs of arsenic is only a little less horrible than Nana pitted with small-pox and dying alone neglected by her friends. Mrs. Bernard-Beere's acting will draw all London during the season, and the success of the dramatised "society" novel will probably inundate the stage with plays that analyse and dissect every form and feature of human depravity. Everyone to his own taste. There are evidently thousands in our midst who prefer the odour of a dust-heap to the scent of a rose garden.

When they were discussing theatrical libraries, the other day, in connection with the Stratford-on-Avon scheme, it was observed that there was no storehouse for current and contemporary plays, that are supposed to be buried in prompters' boxes, and often burned when theatres catch fire. But it is forgotten what an accurate and exhaustive library of plays and manuscripts is contained at the Lord Chamberlain's Office, dating back from the time when the first appointment of Examiner of Plays was made by Act of Parliament. By the courtesy of that official, an author who has lost all copies of an old play and cannot unearth them from a theatre or manager, is

always permitted to secure an accurate copy of his work, on the payment of a small fee to the official copyist. This boon has often and often secured to the stage a successful revival which would otherwise have been impossible; for the theatrical records and libraries at most theatres are lamentably deficient. Very few of them have kept an unbroken series of bound play bills. As to prompt copies of plays, as a rule, when a run is over they disappear into space, and in a few months nobody can find them.

Managers have not yet definitely made up their minds as to the value of an orchestra in a theatre. Some consider it the correct thing to play the people in; others are determined to play them cheerfully out. At one house the musicians, assertive and exposed, deafen the audience and prevent conversation with overwhelming brass instruments; at another, the concealed and subterranean band is as meek and mild as a mouse behind a wainscot. At the Court Theatre, for many years past, the interludes of music by Carl Arnbrüster's selected musicians have been an important feature in the scheme of amusement. Playgoers have enjoyed a chamber concert as well as a play. Recently, at Mr. Richter's concerts, a viola obligato on Berlioz's "Harold en Italie" was played by Mr. Krause, who has been for six years in the Ambrüster Court Orchestra; and his colleagues are proud of the distinction offered to one who graduated in the little musical society that has given so much pleasure to countless playgoers.

One of the most interesting books recently published, the work of a clever, well-informed and genial companion, is "Music and Manners," by an old friend to readers of THE THEATRE, W. Beatty Kingston. As a practical authority on music, a brilliant executant, and a true lover of the pianoforte, Mr. Kingston is known wherever musicians assemble. But he does not in these volumes discuss music alone. Having travelled half over the world and observed men and women wherever he went, our lively author talks to us as amusingly in a book as he does at a dinner-table. Mr. Kingston has a delightful style, scholarly but never pedantic, witty but not vulgar. One chapter on dogs, the dogs he met at Rossi's villa in Italy, is worthy of Dickens himself in photographic reproduction of the reality of animal life and observant humour. But it is a book essentially to be read on a sofa with a pipe on a wet day, in a hammock on a lawn under the summer trees, in bed when everything is quiet. For such a book soothes and amuses. The two handsome volumes are published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall.

The career of Miss Angela Fenton has been as brief as it is without doubt interesting, and would seem to point to the fact that there are instances when a certain latent talent for acting is of so marked a nature

when discovered that it counteracts the necessity for years of drudgery and toil. The rule is sometimes proved by the exception, and here is an instance of a lady of singular refinement and personal charm, which has often been exercised in a far different sphere of life, mounting at once by leaps and bounds to a leading and prominent position in the profession she has adopted. Miss Angela Fenton made her *début* as Portia in "The Merchant of Venice," at a Vaudeville *matinée*, in June, 1886. It was a most interesting performance, clever and unconventional, both in reading and costumes. For the first time Portia, when attired as the learned doctor, did not wear petticoats. Miss Fenton subsequently appeared at *matinées* in London as Rosalind, Viola, Frou-Frou, and Lady Teazle. Her success in the last character determined her career. Mr. Edward Compton was lucky enough to secure her services, and the new Lady Teazle, youthful, bright, highly intelligent, and consistently refined, gave a fresh interest to Sheridan's immortal play. After leaving Mr. Edward Compton, on his relinquishing the Strand Theatre, Miss Angela Fenton was engaged by the English Comedy Company as the "leading lady," and has played in the provinces Miss Hardcastle, Lady Teazle, and Miss Sterling in "The Clandestine Marriage." Once more back at the Strand, this gifted lady has re-established herself in the favour of a discriminating London public.

Mr. Arthur Cecil was not intended for the stage, nor does he come of a theatrical family. He belongs to the Blunts (his family name), who have been solicitors for generations, he was himself designed for the army, and he was educated at a well-known school at East Sheen, where he had the Bishop of Colombo and Mr. Justice Straight for schoolfellows. Music and the drama very early in life claimed him for their own. His first appearance on the stage as an amateur was at the little theatre on Richmond Green, now destroyed, but which, in its day, has witnessed the triumphs of Edmund Kean and the *début* of Helen Faucit. His first London appearances, however, were not on what is known as the legitimate stage, but at "The Gallery of Illustration," where he supported Mrs. German Reed's company. On Easter Monday, 1869, he made his *début* there as Mr. Churchmouse in "No Cards," Mr. W. S. Gilbert; and as Box in the musical version of "Box and Cox," by Messrs. Burnand and A. Sullivan. The latter part was created by Mr. Cecil, and he has played it with great success over four hundred times. During the five years he was a member of the German Reed company, Mr. Cecil became immensely popular in a great number of amusing character sketches. Mr. Cecil is indebted for the few opportunities he has had of appearing in Shakespearean drama to Mr. John Hollingshead, under whose management he played a great variety of parts at the Gaiety and Opera Comique in the season of 1874-5. His Dr. Caius in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" was distinctly one of the most successful of his impersonations during that season. Among the many parts which Mr. Cecil has created in his career of some eighteen years upon the stage

may be mentioned that of Dr. Downward, in Wilkie Collins's play of "Miss Gwilt," first produced at the Globe Theatre in 1876, in which he made a very great success; that of Chapuy, the Spanish Envoy, in Tom Taylor's "Anne Boleyn," produced in the same year at the Haymarket; that of a sort of French Paul Pry called Baron Verduret, in "Honour," produced at the Court; that of Baron Stein in "Diplomacy," which he played for twelve months, being the only original member of the cast who remained in it during the whole run of the piece. "The Times" of that date remarks of this performance: "Mr. Cecil's rare talents for disguise of speech, manner, and appearance were shown in their fullest significance in the small but highly finished part of the Russian agent." Box, in the musical version of "Box and Cox," has already been mentioned, and Mr. Posket, the Mulberry Street stipendiary, in "The Magistrate," has added yet another to Mr. Cecil's gallery of original portraits, followed, of course, by his irresistible performances in "The Schoolmistress," as the broken-down swell, and in "Dandy Dick" as the melodramatic butler. Mr. Cecil's career on the stage has been as interesting to art as it has been honourable to a clever, popular, and high-minded gentleman. Messrs. Cecil and Clayton's management of the Court opened most auspiciously with "The Millionaire," a dramatised version by G. W. Godfrey of Mr. Edmund Yates's novel "Kissing the Rod." In this piece Mr. Cecil impersonated Ned Guyon, a part in which he made one of the most pronounced of the many successes which have attended him on the stage. Perhaps one of the most significant signs of the position which Mr. Cecil holds in public estimation is the fact that a year or two ago he was invited to represent the Drama at the opening dinner of the Royal Academy, being the fourth actor who had been so honoured since the custom of inviting an actor to this banquet became established, his predecessors having been John Hare, Hermann Vezin, and Henry Irving. It should be added, that vocal music composed by Mr. Cecil has frequently found a place in the Monday Popular Concerts.

With a mixture of humour and sincerity not always to be met with in managers, on the withdrawal of "Ivy," it was announced in the papers that "Mr. Willie Edouin's comedy-drama having failed, he will next Wednesday produce 'A Tragedy.'" On the 28th of April accordingly did this tragedy bring back merriment and genuine fun within the walls of the Royalty Theatre. For "A Tragedy" by Charles Fawcett proved to be a three-act farcical comedy, and a right merry one to boot. In a play of this calibre, the originality of the materials selected is not of so much moment as the way they are handled: if the treatment be new, and the work skilfully done, every requirement is fulfilled. The starting idea of "A Tragedy" is simple enough; the complications resulting from it indescribable. Gregory Graysin, a barrister, writes a tragedy and proposes to produce it unknown to his wife. A conversation which takes place at his chambers between himself, the leading actress, and a strolling actor especially engaged to

play the villain, is overheard by his clerk, who becomes convinced that they are about to perpetrate some horrible murder, and at once sets a detective to watch them. To attempt to relate in a few words the embroglio arising from this, is an impossible task; everyone is in turn arrested on suspicion of murder, including the murdered man; who, of course, has never departed this life. The dialogue is smart and clever throughout; some of the scenes are capital. One of the best, and most truly comical, is caused by the blunder of the detective, who handcuffs a lady and the strolling player together. The devices of these two highly respectable and virtuous people to hide the fact from their friends, belongs to the very best style of farce. Indeed, in many instances the author has shown himself capable of writing pure comedy; and one regrets to see him use such vulgar devices as making people disappear down lifts, fight with fire-irons, and crash through conservatories; these things find their proper place in pantomimes, and are by no means the most amusing scenes in "A Tragedy." The cleverly drawn character of John Philip Macready Burbage, actor, elocutionist, and photographic artist, makes up for many deficiencies, and furnishes Mr. Willie Edouin with one of the best parts he has had for a long time, indeed, it may be called a *chef d'œuvre* of its kind; it is a perfect study and not overdone. Miss Olga Brandon is to be commended for her style of acting, which shows that she understands that one can be comical and ladylike at the same time. Mr. Eric Lewis and Mr. Edward Emery are also good, and the rest of the cast is satisfactorily filled by Mr. Albert Chevalier, Mr. Walter Groves, Mr. Edward Thirlby, Miss Marie Hudspeth, Miss Emily Dowton, and Miss Dulcie Douglas. "A Tragedy" has found favour with the public, and is likely to have a long and successful run. If one is inclined to be over critical about a farce, it is because Mr. Fawcett shows himself capable of doing still better things.

A translation from a German play under the title of "The Witch," and produced at the Princess's, is worth notice, as it introduced (to use a consecrated phrase: alas! there is no better), a new candidate for histrionic honours. This is Mrs. Marsham Rae, wife of a gentleman to whom the amateur lady performer is under an eternal obligation, for he furnished her with the admirable and showy adaptation "The Fair Encounter." Mrs. Rae is a pleasing, interesting person, and, we should say, charged with sympathetic power. True, she somewhat overdid the character alike in gesture, tone, and expression, labouring all too much; but this is a good fault, which time and practice will amend. Miss Sophie Eyre was occasionally powerful, but the play is old fashioned, long drawn out and gloomy. There is no interest nowadays, in jocose soldiers who talk over their mugs in Sheridan Knowlesian lines.

New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the Provinces, and Paris, from April, 23, 1887, to May 18, 1887:—

(Revivals are marked thus.)*

LONDON :

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| April | 25 | "Twice Married," a new and original comedy-drama, in three acts, by Clement O'Neil and Harvey Silvester. Gaiety—matinée. |
| " | " | "May and December," comedy, in three acts, by Sydney Grundy and Joseph Mackay. Criterion—matinée. |
| " | 26 | "The Witch," a drama, in five acts, adapted from the German by C. Marsham Rae. Princess's—matinée. |
| " | 28 | "A Tragedy," a farcical comedy, in three acts, by Charles S. Fawcett. Royalty. |
| " | 29 | "The Alderman," a new modern comedy, in the acts, by James Mortimer. Criterion—matinée. |
| May | 4 | "Tea," a new and original farcical comedy, in three acts, by Maurice Noel. Criterion—matinée. |
| " | 7 | "The Right Man," new original melodrama, in five acts, by George Carter and Lionel Ellis. Sanger's. |
| " | 9* | "The Clandestine Marriage," Colman and Garrick's comedy. Strand. |
| " | 11 | "Vittoria Contarini," romantic play, in a prologue and four acts, by A. W. Dubourg. Princess's—matinée. |
| " | 11 | "Blue Ribbons," farce, in three acts, by Walter Browne and J. E. Soden. Gaiety matinée. |
| " | 14 | "Jubilation," musical mixture, in one act, by "Richard Henry," music by Ivan Caryl and H. J. Leslie. Prince of Wales's. |
| " | 16* | "The Merchant of Venice." Lyceum. |
| " | " | "As in a Looking Glass," original play, in four acts, adapted by F. C. Grove from the novel of the same name, by F. C. Philips. Opera Comique. |

PROVINCES :

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| April | 29 | "Gold Dust," a domestic drama, in five acts, by George de Lara. Winter Gardens, Blackpool. |
| " | " | "Waiting," a dramatic episode, in one act, translated from the Swedish by David Bergandahl. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. |
| " | 30 | "The Spinster," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Percy Gwynne and Cyril Harrison. New Cross Hall. |
| May | 5 | "Never Despair," melodrama, in a prologue and four acts, by George Comer. Gaiety, Halifax. |
| " | 7 | "A Mock Doctress," farce, in one act, by Scott Battams. Lyric Hall, Ealing. |
| " | 16 | "By Special Licence," drama, in a prologue and three acts, by Frank Marryat. Theatre Royal, Longton. |

PARIS :

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| April | 17* | "Les Folies-Dramatiques," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Clairville and Dumanoir. Variétés. |
| " | 18* | "Le Gentilhomme Pauvre," comedy, in two acts, by MM. Dumanoir and Lafargue. Gymnase. |

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- April 23* "Le Meurtrier de Théodore," a comedy, in three acts, by MM. Clairville, Alphonse Brot, and Victor Bernard. Gymnase.
- " 19 "Mademoiselle de Bressier," a drama, in five acts, by M. Albert Delpit. Ambigu.
- " 22* "Les Mousquetaires au Convent," comic opera, in three acts, words by MM. Paul Ferrier and Jules Prével, music by M. Louis Varney. Folies-Dramatiques.
- " 22* "La Mascotte," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Chivot and Duru, music by M. Audran. Menus-Plaisirs.
- " 24* "Les Fourchambault," comedy, in five acts, by M. Emile Augier. Théâtre Français.
- " 25* "Les Deux Merles blancs," vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Labiche and Delacour. Renaissance.
- " 25* "Edgard et sa Bonne," comedy, in one act, by MM. Labiche and Marc Michel. Renaissance.
- " 28 "Clo-Clo," comedy vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Albin Valabrègue and Pierre Decourcelle. Cluny.
- " 29* "La Femme à Papa," comedy vaudeville, in three acts, by MM. Alfred Hennequin and Albert Millaud. Variétés.
- " 29* "Les Beaux Messieurs de Bois Doré," a drama, in five acts, by Georges Sands and Paul Meurice. Porte-St.-Martin.
- May 2* "L'Amour Mouillé," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Jules Prével and Arnaud Liorat, music by M. Louis Varney. Nouveautés.
- " 4* "Marie Jeanne ou la Femme du Peuple," drama, in four acts by M. Adolphe d'Ennery. Ambigu.
- " 7 "Le Privilège de Gargantua," comedy, in one act, in verse, by MM. Grandvallet and Jules Truffier. Odéon.
- " 7* "Claudie," drama, in three acts, in prose, by Georges Sand. Odéon.
- " 10* "Mam'zelle Nitouche," comedy, in three acts and four tableaux by MM. Henri Meilhac and Albert Millaud, music by Hervé Variétés.
- " 10 "Rages de Deuts," comedy, in one act, by M. Foley. Pigalle Club.
- " 10 "Tous les Lauriers ne sont pas Roses," comedy, in two acts, by M. Boilly. Pigalle Club.
- " 10 "Sophie," comedy, in one act, by MM. Henri Martin and Lucien Arnaud. Pigalle Club.
- " 11* "L'Enlèvement Mutuel," monologue, by M. Charles Narrey. Gymnase.
- " 11* "Un Monsieur qui suit les Femmes," comedy, in two acts, by MM. Théodore Barrière and A. Decourcelle. Gymnase.
- " 11* "La Cantinière," comic opera, in three acts, by MM. Burani and Ribeyre, music by M. Robert Planquette. Folies-Dramatiques.
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